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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IT is too often the fate of the works of some good old divines, who once were eminent for learning, piety, and usefulness, to be consigned to obscurity and dust on a bookseller's shelf, till produced for sale at the low price usually given for waste paper.

This was really the case with an ancient folio purchased by me a few years since, and still in my possession—viz. The Works of the Rev. Samuel Hieron, who died vicar of Modbury, in Devon, at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Of the life and writings of this able divine, a correspondent, in your number for August, expresses a wish to be favoured with the particulars. Such as the book before me furnishes, are much at his service; and I am happy to communicate them through the channel of your valuable miscellany. It consists of two volumes, bound in one. The first contains a great variety of sermons (the only part of his works, it seems, published in his life time), with the following tracts—viz. "The Preacher's Plea," "An Answer to a Popish Rhyme," "Meditations touching Death," "The Doctrine of the Beginning of Christ," "An Help unto Devotion," and five additional sermons. The second volume contains a few sermons; and thirty lectures on the fifty-first Psalm, entitled, "Penance for sin." Most of the sermons, agreeably to the taste of the age, are distinguished by quaint titles.

The following account of the author's life is extracted *verbatim* from an Address to the Reader prefixed to the second volume, dated 29th March 1620, and signed "Robert Hill."

"He was the son of a most worthy pastor, who, being much respected by that true servant of God, master Fox, was persuaded to leave teaching of children, in which art he was one of the worthies of his age, to take upon him the teaching of men: and being placed at Epping, in the county of Essex, did for many years together so labour in his calling, that it pleased God by his ministry to add unto the church many that should be saved. I know not how many children he left behind him. This one was instead of and above many. And as though that good *Elkanah* would even from the cradle dedicate him to God, he called his name Samuel—that is, heard or appointed of God;—and as if God himself would assign him for the sacrifice of his people, he appointed he should be named *Hieron*—that is, one fit for this spiritual sacrifice. To the end he might prove a profitable teacher, he was first educated by his learned father, and from him conveyed to the King's school near Windsor; from whence he was chosen to King's college in Cambridge; where he made such progress in few years, that at his first shewing of himself in that college, he preached with such approbation and applause, that to me, who heard him often in his young years, he seemed rather a bachelor in divinity, than a bachelor of arts, and rather a divine of forty, than four-and-twenty years age. Yea, he

was so much admired, that he became of such note whilst he staid in London, that many congregations, yea, and the inns of court, greatly desired to enjoy his ministry. But being by that most learned and worthy provost, sir Henry Savile, called to a charge in the gift of Eton college, he, following that call, did so demean himself in that place till he died, that not only the people of Modbury in Devon, but many other places of that county and country, were much comforted by his pains in preaching. He was reverenced of the poor, admired of the rich, countenanced of the great ones, and respected of all."

Of the age of this excellent man at the time of his decease, I find nothing recorded. No mention is made of the year when he died. The event, however, must have occurred prior to 1620, that being the date of his posthumous works. But of the *manner* of his death there exists an interesting narrative, sent by his physician to a friend, and annexed to the first volume of his works; whereof I beg leave to subjoin a copy.

" Sir,

" I doubt not but ere this time you have heard of Mr. Hieron's departure. I was with him most part of his sickness, which was one whole month. He had the stone; but died of a *Cardialgia*, a disease in *Orificio Ventriculi*. He lay most part of his sickness exceeding silent; oftentimes not answering when he was asked a question; and sometimes weeping bitterly. Upon this occasion, a faithful minister tendering unto him some words of comfort, his answer was, ' There was a great mist betwixt him and that happiness he had looked after, in that he had been a partial judge of his own estate, and had thought better of himself than he deserved.' And at that time he would not be urged to speak any more. But the Thursday night before the Sabbath on which he died, he began to be somewhat liberal in his speech, expressing great peace and inward consolation. I asked him how he did. He answered me, ' A very weak man.' ' By how much weaker you are in body,' said I, ' by so much the more you must labour to be strong in the spirit, as I presume you do.' ' I thank God,' said he, ' I have laboured, and do labour; and I find my labour is not in vain. I have many things to speak that way, but now I want a tongue to utter them: yet something I must speak. I would not have it thought,' saith he, ' that my death is hopeless; for though I have lain all this while silent, as you have seen, yet my thoughts have been taken up with matters of great consequence; and now, I thank my God, my soul is full of comfort. I do verily believe I shall see the light of the Lord in the land of the living. But what am I, or what is my father's house, that God should deal so graciously with my soul? He hath called me unto the state of grace; fitted me in my education for the ministry of his word; brought me, in his appointed time, to the practice thereof; given me some reputation in it; and blessed my labours in some measure unto his people. He hath not dealt thus with every one; no, not of his own chosen. I speak not boastingly, but comfortably; not to extol myself, but to magnify the goodness of my God. I know whom I have professed, whom I have preached, whom I have believed; and now I see heaven open, and ready to receive me. Being freed from all care, except for my people after me, I wish, if God were so pleased, that nothing I have taught them might be the savour of death unto death to any of them. But my own sin hath been the cause that I have seen no more fruit of my labour in their conversion; yet, it may be, another may come after me (as the apostle saith of himself) and reap that I have sown. I confess, that in public I have been somewhat full in

reproof, in admonition, in instruction; but in private my backwardness, my bashfulness, my dastardliness, hath been intolerable; and I may truly say, that if any thing lies as a burden upon my conscience, this is it. But, I praise my God, I know upon whose shoulders to cast it, with the rest of my transgressions.'— Many things more he spake very comfortably at that time, which for brevities sake I omit.

"R. J."

Not to trespass any longer upon your patience, Sir, I have only to observe in general, respecting the works of the divine in question, that half-a-crown procured me what I would not part with for fifty times that sum; as the author (unlike too many of the present day) therein inculcates, with judicious zeal, the grand and distinguishing truths of the Gospel, and at the same time insists upon and powerfully enforces, as the genuine and necessary result of a cordial reception of the same, a holy life and conversation. "*He was a burning and a shining light.*" I am, &c.

CLERICUS BRISTOLIENSIS.

For the Christian Observer.

THE *apomneemoneumata* OF THE APOSTLES—WHAT THEY WERE NOT.

JUSTIN Martyr, in his first Apology, and in his Dialogue with Trypho, part the second, mentions the A.* of the apostles sixteen times—viz. thrice in his Apology, and thirteen times in his Dialogue. And once out of the above number he mentions them as the A. of the apostles and their followers (*a*). In the same Apology he told the emperor, that they were called Evangelia (*b*). He also told him, that those A. were, as well as the prophets, read, on the first day of the week, all over Samaria, both in cities and in the country (*c*). Now as his Apologies were delivered at Rome, and his Dialogue with Trypho was held at Ephesus, those A. must have been generally known; and, it may be presumed, generally known by the name Evangelia.

From those A. called Evangelia, Justin appears to have quoted frequently. And, it should seem, from those only. At least he never refers to the gospel of any particular evangelist; and his quotations seldom, if ever, agree with corresponding texts of any one of the gospels now in use.

A modern candidate for literary fame, who has travelled in some parts of Germany, and has studied the divinity of that country, and who seems to think it far preferable to the old-fashioned notions of his own, has informed us, that those A. were the sayings, &c., of our Lord, collected and recorded by the apostles and their followers; that they were recorded before any of our gospels were written, and in the Hebrew language; that three of our gospels, were, in a manner, copied from them; and, that neither the original document nor its abridgments were known by the name of Evangelium before Justin's days.

That a collection of memoirs concerning our Lord, hypothetically made by the apostles and their followers, if it ever existed, should have been used by the churches of Samaria from the earliest days of Christianity, and that it should have been used even in preference to any other of the gospels now in use, is, surely, not to be wondered at. It would be rather a matter of wonder if it was not so preferred, not only by the churches of Samaria, but by those of every other country, and especially by Jewish converts. And it would be a matter of much greater wonder, if the churches of

* The word Απομνημονευματα will be denoted by the letter A. throughout this paper.

(*a*) p. 301. Thirlby. (*b*) p. 96. (*c*) p. 97.

Samaria, &c., after having so preferred it about a century, should of a sudden have discontinued the use of it, and that soon after it had acquired the name Evangelium. And it would be not a little remarkable, and not at all to the credit of Christians, if it totally disappeared soon after Justin's days.

But what evidence have we from ancient writers that it ever existed, and that it was in the highest repute from the earliest days of Christianity to the time of Justin Martyr? What writer, before Justin's days, has mentioned it? Who among his contemporaries? And what writer among those that came after him? What became of this apostolic autoptic document, so highly valued above others as it seems to have been, and so deservedly? Why was it not more generally known and used by Greeks and Romans?

What evidence have we that this presumed original record was noticed as authoritative by any writer of the second century, beside Justin, or by any later writer? Papias, who appears to have been a Jew, to have understood Hebrew, to have been acquainted with the presbyter John, a disciple of the Lord, and to have been careful in his inquiries concerning the apostles, does not appear to have noticed it. He mentions the Gospel by St. Matthew, and that by St. Mark, and, as Eusebius tells us, has a story from the Gospel according to the Hebrews (*d*); but of those A. it does not appear that he ever heard. Indeed, had he had those A. of the apostles to consult, one cannot see why he should have given himself the trouble to write a book entitled λογιων κυριακων εξηγησις, and why he should have been so very inquisitive about what the apostles had said. Eusebius, it may be thought, seems to suggest that he had not those A. to form his creed by; for he says, that though Papias, in the preface to his work, apprised his reader that he had not been a hearer of the apostles, yet he assured him that he received the articles of his faith from those who were well acquainted with the apostles. And it may be inferred from Papias' own words, in his preface, that he never heard of those A. He therein says, "I shall not think it any trouble to set down, with my expositions, whatever I have well learnt from the elders, and well remembered, confirming my remarks by those traditional accounts. For I never took a pleasure, as most men do, in listening to those who have much to say, but to those who tell the truth; not to those that treasure up in their minds foreign dogmas, but to those that remember such as were given by the Lord concerning the faith, and proceed from the fountain of truth, &c." And after having said this, adds, as Eusebius informs us, "For I was persuaded that I could not profit so much by the reading of books οσον τα παρα ζωζης φωνης και μενασης (*e*)." If the supposed A. were then existing, why did he not make an exception in their favour? Polycarp, by Irenæus' account, apomneemoneumatized the sayings of John, and other eye-witnesses; and, adds Irenæus, I have remembered them with heart-felt satisfaction (*f*). The same writer also appeals to the A. of a certain apostolic presbyter, whom he does not name (*g*); and yet he never mentions the apostolic autoptic A. hypothetically made. He also affirms that there were but four gospels (*h*). Hegesippus quoted from the Gospel according to the Hebrews, and, perhaps, from the Syriac version, but never from the A. of the apostles (*i*). Clemens, too, says there were but four gospels, and, that "those which contain the genealogies were first written (*j*);" and, what is rather remarkable, he says, that he had this information from presbyters who lived before him. Tertullian, also, says, with

(*d*) l. iii. c. 39.

(*e*) l. iii. c. 39. (*f*) Ep. to Florinus.
(*g*) H. E. lv. c. 8. (*h*) l. iii. c. 11.
(*i*) Eccl. Hist. l. iv. c. 24.
(*j*) Eus. E. H. lvi. c. 14.

Irenæus and Clemens, that there were but four gospels, two of which were written by the apostles John and Matthew, the other two by the apostolic men Luke and Mark (*k*). Beside saying this, Tertullian seems to deny that a document claiming to be the joint production of certain apostles ever existed, and that our Gospels were taken from it, as Marcion would insinuate, after it had been interpolated by false apostles(*l*). The writers whose testimony we have been adducing, all lived in the second century, as well as Justin. Among later writers, we need not consult any beside Origen, Eusebius, and Jerom.

Origen mentions gospels written before the canonical four, and among those, that which bore the name of the Gospel by the Twelve; but of those he says the writers επιχειρησαν (*m*). He makes no exception in favour of the supposed authoritative document. Eusebius, in his celebrated chapter (*n*) concerning the Canon of the New Testament, mentions first την αγιαν των Ευαγγελιων τετρακτυν, and, afterwards, as one of the αντιλεγομενοι, the Gospel of the Hebrews. He then proceeds to mention the Gospel of Peter, Thomas, Matthias, Andrew, and John; which, he says, were published by heretics. Of the A. of the apostles he says not a word. Lastly, Jerom, though he mentions the gospels of several apostles, and that duodecim Apostolorum (*o*), yet he mentions them only to let us see how little he thought they deserved the name. Can it now be supposed, that so many celebrated writers of the second and following centuries would have taken no notice of an apostolic document of the first importance, if it ever existed? That it should have been known only in Samaria, is not at all credible.

Again: Peter, we know, told his brethren of the dispersion, after Matthew and Luke had written, "I will endeavour that ye may be able, after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance (*p*)." But what occasion was there to tell his brethren of the dispersion so, if the A. of the apostles were then existing? Could not some of them have translated it as well as Peter, who, by the accounts of several of the earliest fathers, took Mark with him as an interpreter? And does it appear that he translated the A. for them, or that he himself wrote a gospel? Eusebius, who, we know, has professedly given us "an account of what ancient presbyters and writers have handed down concerning the books of both testaments(*q*)," says in his Evang. Demon., "Peter, out of abundance of modesty, thought himself not worthy to write a gospel(*r*)." And as to the A., the same writer has said enough in his Eccl. Hist. to convince us of the absurdity of supposing it ever existed. L. iii. c. 24, speaking of the apostles, he says, "Nor were they greatly concerned about the writing of books." And a few lines after, "Nevertheless, of all the disciples of the Lord, Matthew and John only have left us υπομνηματα, who too, as we are informed, were compelled to write by a kind of necessity"—that is, as he says a few lines after in the same chap., and again

(*k*) Adv. Marc. l. iv. c. 2. p. 502.

(*l*) Si vero Apostoli quidam integrum evangelium contulerunt, de solâ convictus inæqualitate reprehensi, Pseudapostoli autem veritatem eorum interpolarunt, et inde sunt nostra digesta: quod erit germanum illud Apostolorum instrumentum, quod adulteros passum est? Tertul. adv. Marc. l. iv. c. 3. p. 504.

(*m*) Orig. tom. iii. p. 932. ed. Delaruc.

(*n*) Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 25.

(*o*) Prologue to Comment. on St. Matth.

(*p*) 2 Ep. i. c. 15. (*q*) E. H. l. v. c. 8.

(*r*) Serapion, bishop of Antioch, in an ap. to some, who had too much respect for a writing entitled "the Gospel of Peter," says, "We, brethren, receive Peter, and the apostles, as Christ: but as skilful men, we reject those writings that are falsely ascribed to them; well knowing that we have received none such." Eus. E. H. l. vi. c. 12.

in another work (*s*), Matthew was importuned to write by the Jews of Palestine (or, as Epiphanius says(*t*), "by the command of the apostles"), and St. John, many years after, by the presbyters of Ephesus(*u*), and then, because the other three evangelists had omitted to mention several very important transactions of our Lord's ministry.—We see here is an acknowledgment of a person who lived in the beginning of the fourth century, and made it his particular care to inquire what former ecclesiastical writers had said of the books of the New Testament, that those A. never existed. If such a record did exist, why are not the apostles and other eye-witnesses, or their immediate successors, said to have used it? We find that Eusebius says of John, in the chap. above quoted, that he did not use a written gospel before he wrote his own, and, that he then wrote at the request of his friends, to supply the defects of the rest(*v*). He also tells us, in another place, that Bartholomew took that of St. Matthew with him into India (*w*), and that Quadratus, and other immediate successors of the apostles, took with them, not the A. of the apostles, but *των θειων Ευαγγελιων γραφην*(*x*). We are, moreover, told, by a writer of the fifth century(*y*), that Barnabas took St. Matthew's Gospel into Cyprus.

We have now seen that the apostles, by Eusebius' account, did not write gospels; that St. Peter, above all the rest, was too modest to write a gospel; that Matthew and John only, of all the disciples of the Lord, left *υπομνηματα*: that Matthew was entreated to write even by the Jews of Palestine; that John did not use a written gospel before he wrote his own, and that he wrote to supply the defects of the other; and that many gospels were forged by heretics, under the name of several apostles, in very early times.

Let us now proceed to consider what reason there is to think that Matthew, Mark, and Luke borrowed from any written document.

We have already seen what Eusebius and Epiphanius say of the means by which St. Matthew was induced to write a gospel. To their testimonies may be added that of Origen, who says, "Matthew &c. did not take in hand to write: but being full of the Holy Ghost, wrote his gospel (*z*)." Of course, Origen does not seem to have had any apprehension that Matthew copied from those pretended A. of the apostles. Of Mark's Gospel, Papias, who gave the earliest account of it, says, "Mark, being the interpreter of Peter, wrote exactly whatever *εμνημονευσεν*: but not in the order in which things were done or spoken by Christ. For he was neither a hearer nor a follower of the Lord; but, as I said, afterwards followed Peter, who made his discourses for the benefit of those who heard him, but not in the way of a regular history of our Lord's words. So that Mark committed no mistake in writing some things *ως απεμνημονευσεν*. For this one thing he made his care, to omit nothing which he had heard, and to say nothing false in what he had related (*aa*)." This information, it seems, he had from the presbyter John, who had been an eye-witness, and was, not unlikely, the apostle. Of course, by Papias' account, we may conclude that St. Mark certainly did not copy from a written document. And the account of Clemens of Alexandria, we are told both by Eusebius and Jerom, agrees with it. The testimony of Clemens, indeed, as quoted by Eusebius (*bb*), who tells us that Clemens had it from more ancient presbyters, is much more to the purpose. He not only says that Mark recorded what

(*s*) Chron. (*t*) Hær. 51. p. 185.
(*u*) Eus. E. H. l. iii. c. 24.
(*v*) Ibid. (*w*) Eus. E. H. l. v. c. 10.
(*x*) E. H. l. iii. c. 37.
(*y*) Alexand. Monach. ad. Ann. 485. n. xxxi.

(*z*) Origen ubi supra.
(*aa*) Eus. E. H. l. iii. c. 39.
(*bb*) Eus. E. H. l. ii. c. 15.

Peter preached; he also adds, that he did it at Rome (*cc*), and, what is very remarkable, he says that the Romans παρακλησεσι παντοιαις Μαρκον λιπαρῆσαι: and in the same sentence calls his Gospel υπομνημα. A plain proof this, surely, that Clemens of Alexandria had not the least apprehension that Mark copied from those hypothetical A. of the apostles and their followers. Irenæus (*dd*), too, says that Mark wrote at Rome: his words are: Μετα δε τυτων εξοδον, Μαρκος ο μαθητης και ερμηνευτης Πετρυ και αυτος τα υπο Πετρυ κηρυσσομενα εγγραφως ημιν παρεδωκε. Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, and Jerom, also confirm this testimony. Origen says of Mark ως Πετρος υφηγησατο αυτω ποιησαντα (*ee*). Eusebius, in his Evang. Demon., says, "But Mark, who was his friend and disciple, is said to have recorded Peter's relations of the acts of Jesus, &c.....And Peter testifies these things himself. For all things in Mark are said to be *memoirs* (not of the apostles in general) but of Peter's discourses." Athanasius says that "the Gospel according to Mark was dictated by Peter at Rome (*ff*)." Jerom says, with Clemens, that Mark wrote at the request of the Romans: "Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, at the desire of the brethren at Rome, wrote a short gospel, according to what he had heard related by Peter: which when Peter knew, he approved of it, and authorised it to be read in the churches: as Clemens writes, l. 6. of his Institutions, and also Papias, bishop of Hierapolis (*gg*)."

What stronger evidence can be adduced to prove that St. Mark did not copy from a written document? If he did, we see that he must have done it at Rome, at the request of Peter's followers—that is, of Jewish believers—even by the testimony of a bishop of Alexandria, who is said to have obtained his account from more ancient presbyters.

St. Luke, we find, by his own evidence, did not copy from those A.: for he told his friend Theophilus, that he undertook to write "the history of those things which are most assuredly believed among us," after many others, that Theophilus might know the certainty of those things wherein he had been instructed. But what occasion was there for him to do so, if the A. of the apostles were then existing? Can it be supposed that the many would have presumed to publish incorrect accounts after the publication of a document so authoritative? And how could he assure his friend that his account was more to be depended on than any of those circulated by the many? Does he say that he had better means of access to the A. than they had, or that he had examined them more carefully? He does not say so—indeed, he is supposed to have written, not in Judea, where the many are supposed to have written, and where the A. are supposed to have been composed; but at Antioch, or in some parts of Asia or Greece. That he should have undertaken to correct them in a foreign country, if the A. were then existing, is not a little surprising; and that he should have done it by the help of the A. without acquainting Theophilus with it, is

(*cc*) St. Peter, I reckon, did not come to Rome before the reign of Nero, probably not till the second time that Paul was in that city, in the year 63 or 64. And yet, at this time, the Christians at Rome (say rather the Jewish believers) desired Mark to give them an account in writing of Peter's preaching, for refreshing their memories concerning what the apostle had said of Christ and his doctrine. The consequence is manifest; they had not then any written gospel in their hands, *nor did they know that there was one.* "The truth is," says Mr. Jones, "if St. Mark, or any one else, had had St. Matthew's Gospel at Rome, there would have been no need of St. Mark's writing." Watson's Tracts, vol. ii. c. 4. §. 2. p. 28.

(*dd*) Ir. l. iii. c. 1.

(*ee*) Eus. E. H. l. vi. c. 25.

(*ff*) Synops.

(*gg*) De Vir. illust.

not less so. So far is he from saying any thing of the sort, that he says he wrote after the many; not because he had access to the A., but because he had followed *all* from the beginning; ανωθεν. What he means by *all*, we may easily guess by looking back to the second verse, where he mentions the αυτοπται and the υπηρεται, but where does he mention their A.? This we learn from the preface. And when we attend to what ancient authors have said of his gospel, we shall perceive that they never thought of his having copied from a written document. Irenæus says, Λουκας ὁ ακολουθος Παυλου, το υπ' εκεινου κηρυσσομενον ευαγγελιον εν βιβλιῳ κατεθετο (*hh*). Origen says, "Luke, &c. did not take in hand to write: but being full of the Holy Ghost wrote his gospel (*ii*). Eusebius says he wrote εκ της αμα Παυλῳ συνουσιας τε και διατριβης, και της των λοιπων Αποστολων ομιλιας ωφελημενος (*jj*).

We have now not only seen that the apostles did not write gospels, and that Peter was too modest to write a gospel; we have also seen that Matthew, Mark, and Luke did not copy from a written document. And when we come to consider the contents of their gospels, we shall be the more convinced of it.

Why, if Matthew and Luke borrowed their materials from those A., do they appear to differ so materially in their accounts of the same things; and especially of the genealogy? Did those A. contain our Lord's genealogy both by his mother's side and supposed father's? Justin, we know, in his Questiones et Responsiones, says that the evangelists who wrote the genealogies, συνεγραψαντο τας γενεαλογιας, were Hebrews of Hebrews. And what does he mean by συνεγραψαντο τας γενεαλογιας? That they copied the genealogies from the A.? The learned author of the Questiones et Responsiones would hardly have said of two evangelists who copied different genealogies, in different languages, and in very remote countries, from the same document, συνεγραψαντο. Not a century after Justin's days, Africanus undertook to reconcile the apparent difference between the genealogies of those two evangelists εξ ιστοριας εις αυτον κατελθουσης (*kk*). And what history concerning this matter had reached his time? Did he appeal to any copy of the A.? Or to tradition concerning it? If he did, his appeal, one would think, would have been satisfactory. But this does not appear to have been the case; for Eusebius says, των δε πιστων εκαστος αγνοια τ' αληθους ευρησιλογειν εις τους τοπους πεφιλοτιμηται. κ. τ. λ. (*ll*). But what occasion was there ευρησιλογειν about them, if the document from which those evangelists copied was referred to by Africanus? The general use of a document so authoritative in Samaria, if we could suppose that it was only used in that country, it may be thought would have furnished Christians, for a century or two, with at least a traditional account how those disagreements happened, even if all the copies be supposed to have disappeared immediately after Justin's days. Of the temptation, and the sermon on the mount, and the treatment which our Lord received after his apprehension, it is not necessary to say any thing.

Again: Why have Mark and Luke omitted to mention the account of the Magi, which Justin says was in the A.? Why have Matthew and Mark omitted to mention several other important things, especially the command to continue the use of bread and wine, the election of Matthias, and the promise and the gift of the Holy Ghost? Those things they have both omitted to mention; and notwithstanding Justin says "the apostles and their followers apomneemoneumatised παντα

(*hh*) Ir. l. iii. c. 1.
(*ii*) Orig. tom. iii. p. 922.
(*jj*) Eus. E. H. l. ii. c. 15.
(*kk*) Eus. E. H. l. vi. c. 31.
(*ll*) E. H. l. i. c. 7.

τα περι τȣ σωτηρος ημων Ιησȣ Χριστȣ (*mm*)," and notwithstanding the first-mentioned was, by his account, in the A. (*nn*). St. Matthew has, beside those other things, even omitted to mention the ascension. Why, if the first three gospels were copied from the A., are they said to have been handed to John at Ephesus for his approbation? Why is he said to have observed that they contained only the transactions of the latter part of our Lord's ministry? Why is he said to have been requested by his intimates, many of whom were Jewish believers, to write another gospel so long after? His gospel is almost entirely different from those of the other three. Did the plenary composite gospel not contain a tittle of what he has recorded; or did the others omit to copy the many transactions brought to light by him? And, with regard to the expressions used by the three first evangelists, if they copied from those A. why, in every instance mentioned by Justin, do they appear to have copied inaccurately?

Can it now be supposed that this document ever existed? Or, if it did, that Matthew, Mark, and Luke borrowed from it? Or that an apostolic record of such importance, which had been hypothetically preserved till Justin's time, and by his account used by the churches of Samaria in preference to any other, and appealed to by him as sufficient to convince a Roman emperor of the truth of what he said, should have been presently after lost, nobody knows how, and so lost as never to be heard of by any of his successors, nor even his cotemporaries? What then shall we think of the learning or the sagacity of the gentleman who has broached, or of those gentlemen who have adopted, views so inconsistent and incredible?

CHILIARCH.

Exeter, Sept. 13. 1808.

(*mm*) p. 54. (*nn*) p. 96, 97.

For the Christian Observer.

ON OUR LIABILITY TO SUDDEN DEATH.

THE liability of man to sudden death, is doubtless one of the means by which Providence intends to keep alive in us the sense of eternal things. The most healthy persons are peculiarly subject to the more violent disorders, and they also are most exposed to a variety of accidents. These are the men who fall in war, and encounter the perils of the sea; who visit unhealthy climates, and die under the disorders which so much abound there. These also, it is to be feared, are the men who are the least disposed to religion. If it should happen to any of these hale and thoughtless persons to cast an eye on the present paper, I would entreat them for once to consider seriously the subject of which it treats. A little meditation upon it will not bring Death the nearer, and it may serve to lessen the dread of this king of terrors, whenever he shall actually approach.

Death, in one sense, comes suddenly upon almost all: I mean, that however slowly it may advance, however plain and full may be the notice which it gives, few dying men are inclined to believe that it is extremely near. We feel our health decay; but our friends are perpetually telling us of some one who has had exactly the same symptoms of decline, and has recovered. We have manifest tokens of a speedy departure; but our physician deems it necessary to sustain our spirits, and endeavours to cheer us in proportion as our danger is become plain and imminent. We entertain, at the most, only a slight suspicion of the true state of the case. We lose our faculties before the secret is fully disclosed to us; and perhaps the opportunity is scarcely given even to cry out, "the Lord have mercy on our souls."

Such being the common course, it cannot be improper to suggest to the living, and more particularly to

those who are presuming on their health and strength, a few means of preparation for that sudden death to which we are all so evidently and so constantly exposed.

The first point on which I shall touch is, the making of a will. It is surprising that this act of prudence, and indeed of justice, should so often be neglected. The mode of bequeathing our property should be religiously considered. How many are there who chiefly consult their ambition or their foolish partiality in drawing up this solemn instrument? "I commit my soul," say they, "to the hands of God"—— "and my money," they might add, "to the hands of one already overloaded with wealth, which causes him to riot in luxury; or to some flatterer of my person, some favourer of my vices, some one by whom I have been through life agreeably deceived; and this I do in sure and certain hope of life everlasting." The practice of dividing the chief of our substance equally among our children, granting some advantage to an eldest son, is doubtless a good one, generally speaking; but I apprehend that this principle, of giving equal sums to all except the eldest, ought in many cases to be violated: for there will often be some child, who, on account of infirmity of health, or of losses already experienced, or of other circumstances, has occasion for something more than an ordinary share of the father's patrimony. Children who have been well educated, and taught to love one another, will not be offended at so reasonable a partiality. They will respect their parent for having exercised it, and will probably adopt his example in making their own testament.

A second suggestion which I would offer, respects the orderly settlement of our general affairs. It is the part of a wise man, never to let his concerns fall into a state of confusion, out of which no man can extricate them but himself. "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live," is an expression which will bear to be construed literally. Some men never know the trouble which their own negligent, desultory, and idle habits in this respect occasion. What a laborious work is often that of an executor! How large a portion of the concerns of men of large fortune is thrown into chancery after their decease, on account of the obscurity which involves them! What family disputes, what animosities, what disappointment and distress, what doubt and suspense, what unnecessary labour and turmoil, arise out of this cause!—I say unnecessary, because a few hours of prudent consideration and patient industry in the deceased, would have saved as many months of anxiety and toil in his successors. We have no right thus to tax posterity. Let our bills then be punctually paid. Let there always exist a list of our debtors and creditors, and a general inventory and estimate of our chief property. Let there be a periodical statement, upon paper, of the whole of our income and expenditure. Let our title deeds and other securities be in their proper places. Let all engagements, which we are in honour bound to perform by ourselves or our executors, be reduced to writing. And let there be no papers kept by us, which either charity, prudence, or general propriety ought to have led us to destroy.

A third hint which I would give is, that restitution should be made to as many as we have injured, before either death arrives or a dying hour approaches—I use the word restitution in a large sense. There are few, probably there are none, whom we have wronged in their property; there may be many, nevertheless, whose interests we have unjustly prejudiced, whose reputation we have unfairly lessened, whose faults we have more or less exaggerated, whose kindness we have inadequately returned. There may be some whom we have peevishly or too hastily assumed to be our enemies, and against whom we have fancied that we have

only been protecting ourselves by becoming enemies to them in our turn. Let us endeavour, while we are in life and health, to do *justice* in points like these. Let us not die being in this sense in debt to any one. Our pecuniary debts will be discharged by our executors; but if we die leaving this species of debt, it will be never paid.

Fourthly. I would add, that we are called by our Christian profession to do much more than justice to our neighbour: we should even forgive his wrong. How blessed a thing is it to die being in this important sense in debt to no man, but leaving many men in debt to us; having pardoned freely the injuries which we had received, and having inflicted no injuries, without having endeavoured at least to make full restitution! Let us beware, on this ground, of long-protracted controversies and quarrels. "Let not the sun," said the apostle, "go down upon your wrath." Perhaps that very night, in which you fail to lay aside the anger of the preceding day, may be the night of your sudden departure into the presence of God. It is required by our church, of all who are partakers of the Lord's supper, that they shall be in charity with all men; otherwise they shall not presume to eat of Christ's flesh and drink of his blood. How much more necessary is it to be in charity with all men before we go to taste of that fruit of the vine, of which we hope to partake together with Christ himself in his kingdom above; before we join the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven! The believer may prepare himself, by the special exercise of forgiveness at regularly returning seasons, for the table of his Lord on earth; but he may be called by a sudden voice to the heavenly feast. Let us, therefore, be always ready to meet the Bridegroom; for we know not at what hour the Lord may come. Let us be in the exercise of faith and hope, and, "above all things, let us have fervent charity among ourselves."

I proceed, fifthly, to urge a general moderation in our affection to the things of this life. The men of the old world were swept off in the midst of their planting and building; they married and were given in marriage, they ate, they drank, until the flood came and destroyed them all. It is an awful thing to be carried away while enjoying the full relish of even allowable gratifications. "O David, David" (said Dr. Johnson to his friend Mr. Garrick, while walking in Mr. Garrick's beautiful garden at Hampton), "these are the things which make death seem so terrible." Christianity as clearly inculcates sobriety of mind as to all worldly enjoyments, as it does abstinence from gross vices. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short. It remaineth that both they that have wives be as though they had none, and they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it; for the fashion of this world passeth away."

Contemplate that envied individual. He has succeeded in all the objects of his ambition. He has increased his fortune, raised his fame, established his family, enlarged his influence on every side, and multiplied his creditable connections. He is living in no vice; he is a decent friend even to religion. But his mind is occupied in still adding house to house, and field to field; in admiring the foundation of worldly prosperity which his early wisdom had laid, and in raising still higher the splendid superstructure. There is, as yet, no sensation of weakness in his frame, no paleness in his cheek; his conscience is easy and his sleep is sound; he renders, he says, to every man his due, and he diverts some little part of his ample

revenue to the poor and needy. He looks with complacency on the minute good which he is doing, but with still higher satisfaction on the multitude of dependents who obey him, of humble friends who solicit his favour, of rich and great men who admit him into their circle and call familiarly at his door. He fills a large space in his own eye, and in the eye of those around him; and his heart is distended with joy, while he contemplates his still increasing honours, possessions, and enjoyments: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?"—I would not pronounce a severe sentence against any man; I would, nevertheless, say to every such person (and what prosperous individual may not be included in the admonition?), Take heed lest "thou in thy life time shouldst receive thy good things;"—take heed lest the sum which thou art giving to the poor should be only like the crumbs which Lazarus gathered from the rich man's table;—take heed lest thy heart should be overcharged, if not with surfeiting and drunkenness, at least with the cares of this world; and so that day should come upon thee unawares. The day of true glory to the Christian, is not that in which he shines here below above his earthly fellows; it will be that in which he shall appear in white raiment before God, holding a palm in his hand, in token of his having when on earth gained the victory over the world. Alive to the dangers of his station, knowing how "hard it is for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," he is ever jealous of himself; and amidst all his earthly prosperity feels that he carries about with him a body of sin and death. He desires to escape from the temptations to which his wealth exposes him; from the allurements of the flesh, from the temptations of the world, from the mob which is ever attempting to surround him—the mob, I mean, of selfish, flattering, eager, worldly-minded men.—"Oh præclarum illum diem, cum ex hâc turbâ proficiscar."—To such a character, sudden death is only sudden deliverance.

Acquaintance with God is another important point, which must be mentioned. Many persons think that they sufficiently prepare for death, by performing (it matters little, according to them, from what principle), the proper duty of their station. Duty to God enters little into their thought. Even duty to man is very imperfectly comprehended by them; and the little part of it which is understood, is very inadequately performed. They seem to themselves to do as well as their neighbours; indeed, self-love suggests that they do better. They do not disbelieve the Gospel; they have not examined it sufficiently to make them disbelieve. They incline to the doctrines of their church, because competent men having declared them to be true: it is the part of modesty to adopt the received system of orthodoxy. After all, however, their chief reliance is this, that their life is good.

"He can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

They occasionally hear of some doctrinal points but into these they do not take the trouble of entering. "If" (say they, for example), "when I arrive in the world of light, I shall find that the doctrine of the atonement is true, my good life on earth will, as I trust, entitle me to a share in the benefits of that atonement. If the tenet shall turn out to be false, my good life, in that case also, must be the means of saving me. Much thought upon the subject is therefore unnecessary." Moreover they are continually occupied; they have their family affairs to manage, their company to entertain, their profession to attend to; and human nature, they add, requires also some recreations. God, they trust, will not condemn them for having been no

great theologians; he will make allowance for their circumstances, and will afford to them their share in the common mercies reserved for his creatures, even though he should not exalt them to the highest place in heaven.

Our liability to sudden death is one, perhaps, of the most awakening topics which can be set before such persons. Is it not an awful thing for a man to appear before his eternal Judge—a man who perhaps has applied his mind to the whole circle of human sciences—without having ever exercised his thought either on the laws of God, on the nature of his government, or the means of salvation which the divine wisdom has provided for the sons of men, and has expressedly revealed from heaven? I would ask the person whom I have described, the following questions: Is it not possible that the atonement for sin, in which you scarcely know whether you believe, might, if duly contemplated, become the means of opening to you a new view of your whole condition; of discovering to you that natural corruption of man, which it so necessarily implies; of softening your hard heart, and attracting your affections to God and religion? Might it not thus supply powerful motives to virtuous action, and thus conduce to that good life which you acknowledge to be necessary? May not, therefore, a lively faith in this doctrine, a doctrine which implies the renunciation of that confidence in your good works to which you are inclining, be appointed by God to be the very instrument of your salvation? Again: May you not err, as I have indeed already intimated that you are likely to do, as to the nature and extent of your true duty; and is there not a sober study of divinity, which would introduce you to a better acquaintance with it? You plead the urgency of your worldly business; but may not that which you call business, be fairly denominated ambition? May not your prudence be covetousness; your professed regard to your family, modified selfishness; and is not that degree of abstraction which religion promotes, the best remedy for all this self-deceit, and the most effectual protection against it?—But above all, I would ask, Whether you would wish to meet God face to face, without having ever seriously contemplated his nature and his perfections? Are you ready for sudden death? Would you on this very night venture your eternal interests on the soundness of your reasonings? And here let it be remarked, that if the Scriptures are true (and you are by no means prepared to deny their truth), the plea which you set up will not serve you; for they continually represent an acquaintance with God, with Christ, and with his Gospel, as necessary to salvation. They denounce "Vengeance on them *that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*" They identify the careless person with the unbeliever. The man who turns from the offer of the Gospel, though it be only "to his farm and to his merchandize," is represented as having no part in its blessings. You may go to public worship, it is true; but you worship, like the Athenians, "an unknown God," until you begin to give your mind to the revelation of himself which he has afforded to you.

How happy, on the other hand, is the man who has acquainted himself with the great objects of faith, and, to borrow a scripture expression, "both knows God" and is known of him! His heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. "Whom," says he, "have I in heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire in comparison of thee." When he contemplates the dissolution of the body; when he hears of sudden deaths around him, and reflects that his own departure may perhaps be equally abrupt and unexpected; he is able to say "'Lord, I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine

honour dwelleth.' I have delighted myself while on earth in frequenting thine holy temple. I have hallowed thy Sabbaths. My private supplications have also, day by day, been devoutly made unto thee. On thy law, indeed, have I meditated both day and night. In the intervals of wakefulness on my bed, my thoughts have often turned to heavenly things; and amidst my occupations in the world, thou knowest that my heart hath frequently addressed thy throne for grace to enable me to fulfil the whole extent of my duty. Thou knowest, also, that I have done good to my fellow-creatures for thy sake; that in feeding the hungry, in visiting the sick, I have remembered that I have been thy steward; and that I have not been eager to lay up for myself a treasure on earth, because I have looked to a treasure in heaven, where I have placed my heart also. I feel, nevertheless, that I have greatly sinned against thee. Many have been the transgressions of my youth, and many those even of my best days. Many have been the errors of which my fellow-creatures have known, and many those of which thou, and thou only, hast been the witness. But I have learnt to understand something of the riches of thy grace, and to look my own numberless iniquities in the face, knowing that if I confess my sins, thou art faithful and just to forgive me my sins, and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. I have often meditated on the great work of my Redeemer. I have learnt, I trust, 'to know him,' and the benefit of his death 'and the power of his resurrection;' and firm in the faith of Christ crucified for me, I am ready to obey thy summons to the eternal world, by whatever messenger it may be sent, and even in the most unlooked-for moment. 'I will walk through the valley of the shadow of death, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.' I am now, indeed, in the midst of life, but I know that I may be laid low even in a moment. 'All the days of mine appointed time I will wait, till my change come.' If it be thy will to send infirmities which shall announce to me the gradual approach of death, continue to me thy wonted consolations, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me; but if thou shouldst see fit to call me by a sudden stroke, accept, for my Saviour's sake, that repentance in which I daily exercise myself, and receive, O Lord, that soul which thou hast redeemed." S. P.

For the Christian Observer.

ON THE MORAL OBLIGATIONS OF DEISTS.

The duties which Christianity requires have been often stated and urged on the consciences of those who profess to believe it. But what is the case with those who reject the authority of revelation, whether they be sober, reasoning deists, who see the objections to the Christian scheme in so strong a light that they cannot believe its divine original; or whether they are thoughtless, dissipated persons, whose understandings are biased by their passions, and who reject the Gospel because they dislike the purity it requires? Are such persons freed from the obligations of religion because they do not believe in Christ? May they sin with impunity? May they indulge their natural propensities free from fear, and from the guilt which those would incur who believe the Gospel and violate its precepts? By no means. They know and acknowledge that there is a God: they are bound, therefore, to glorify him as such.

Allowing, therefore, that a person who rejects revelation, only believes the being of a God, that very belief appears to me clearly to involve certain obligations on the part of the person who entertains it, as well as the consideration of responsibility for the wilful violation of those obligations. But this will be made

still more evident, if we descend to particulars.

First, then, it will be admitted that *reverence towards God* is indispensably required of all who acknowledge his existence. That reverence which we feel in the presence of a superior, and of which we cannot divest ourselves without doing violence to our plainest ideas of propriety, is peculiarly due to the Deity. And this sentiment, if genuine, though it will indeed shew itself outwardly, ought to extend far beyond the mere outward expression of veneration: it ought to be deeply rooted in the heart. A deist, therefore, who acts consistently with his avowed principles, will abstain from the profane and irreverent use of the name of God. The truth or falsehood of the Christian revelation will make no difference in this respect. The bare acknowledgment of the existence of a Deity, and the feelings which naturally arise in the mind from contemplating his greatness and beneficence, ought unquestionably to prevent the careless and irreverent use of his name, as a failure in the respect which is due to the first and greatest of Beings.

This reverence will further appear in a careful abstinence from any ridicule or railing, which may tend to lower the respect paid to the Deity by others. He who considers himself as bound to honour God, will deem himself bound also to promote, at least not to diminish, the honour paid to him by the rest of his creatures. Supposing, therefore, that he conceives the religious creed professed by others to be superstitious, and that it is his duty to communicate juster ideas of the Deity: yet ought he not to think himself at liberty to lessen their reverence of God, however erroneous may be their views of religion; but while he endeavours to correct those views, he should labour also to strengthen in their minds the sentiment of veneration for the presence and power of the Almighty. Instead, therefore, of sound argument modestly and seriously urged, such a person will not offer, in support of his opinions, sneers, and scoffs, and sarcasm, and profane or licentious remarks; the plain tendency of which, while they violate equally the laws of decorum and of right reasoning, is, not to correct religious error, but to overturn the authority which religion may already possess. There will at leas be honesty in the reasonings of a *sincere* deist; and whatever may be their effect in producing conviction, he will take care that they shall be so conducted as to strengthen rather than to weaken in his opponent that reverence for God, and that fear of offending him, which even superstition prescribes.

Is it necessary here to remark, how little the spirit and temper generally manifested by those who reject revelation, have accorded with this description, although, at the same time, the conduct I have supposed them to pursue is no more than what is required by their own admitted principles? Those who have been conversant with their writings, or have had opportunities of private intercourse with them, will at once perceive the dissimilarity.

But that reverence for the supreme Being which the principles even of deism require in its professors, will not be confined, as has before been intimated, to a mere abstinence from irreverent expressions: it will produce in the heart such dispositions and affections as may tend to honour God. He who acts up even to that imperfect knowledge of his duty which is derived from the light of nature, will perceive the obligation, under which he is placed, to cherish in himself that spirit of *piety* which will delight to employ itself in traeing out the Creator's wisdom and goodness in the objects around him, and in referring the blessings he enjoys to the divine bounty; which will lead him to cultivate a temper of resignation and submission to his will under the pressure of affliction;

which will generate, also, sentiments of rational love to God (such love as the conduct of a great and beneficent prince would naturally produce in the mind of a subject of an ingenuous disposition), and of gratitude to him for the blessings showered down so lavishly on his creatures. The growth of these dispositions will not be left to chance, but will be encouraged, as the proper dispositions of a creature towards his Creator, by such means as promise to be effectual to that end; by habitual meditation on the subject, and by endeavours to acquire greater light and knowledge. For, surely, the same reasons which make it right to entertain such dispositions at all, make it right also to use those methods of cultivating them which are found to be efficacious in other cases.

2. Some doubt may be entertained, as to whether the principles of deism oblige those who hold them to *worship* the Deity. Yet it is remarkable, that all nations, in all ages, however they may have differed in the mode, have still had some mode of external worship; some mode of openly expressing their dependence on the supreme Being, and their reverence of him; some mode of cherishing those feelings in their own hearts, and of communicating them to others. And it does seem reasonable, that all who entertain the desire of glorifying God, however they may disapprove of the various methods of divine worship hitherto practised, should yet render some species of public homage to their acknowledged Creator and benefactor. For supposing them only to think it a duty to offer thanks to God for his goodness, so continually renewed; this alone would render it necessary that they should cultivate a thankful and devout frame of mind, and that they should be frequent and regular in their expressions of praise. Thus the obligation to worship God, as well as the dispositions required to the due performance of this duty, are perhaps not more plainly declared in Scripture, than they are pointed out by just reasoning, as having their foundation in the nature of things.

3. Another point I would insist on is, that he who acknowledges the being of a God is bound to use diligence in seeking to know his will, and to shew a readiness to comply with it when it is discovered. The will of God may be learnt from the course of nature, or from revelation. From the course of nature it may be inferred, that it is not the will of God that his creatures should be unhappy, or should shorten their own lives, or should render others wretched. And from observation on what passes in the world it may be collected, that it is the tendency of vice not only to render unhappy the vicious person himself, and to shorten his life, but to injure society. It becomes a duty, therefore, to avoid vice, because the constitution of the world plainly indicates that it is contrary to the will of God. But the same reasons which would teach us to avoid vice, will teach us also to dislike it. For it is but a poor way of endeavouring to please God, to abstain merely from those external acts which he disapproves, while He, who looks within, must see that the heart is not in unison with the outward conduct.

Here, then, a new and extensive field of duty opens to the view. It becomes him, who is truly sincere, to examine with the utmost care every line of conduct which leads to pernicious consequences; and not only studiously to avoid it, but to acquire dispositions contrary to it, so that his obedience to the will of God may be from the heart. And this sense of duty will of course give birth to the workings of repentance, whenever any transgression has been committed against the will of God. For the same reasons which prove the necessity of endeavouring to please God, shew the necessity also of sorrow, when, through the violence of passion, or the strength of temptation, his will has been op-

posed or disregarded. Even a deist, therefore, if he acts uprightly, and consistently with his principles and with sound reason, will not find that he enjoys an exemption from the obligations of morality, or repentance; but that there is a large extent of duty, which he is bound to perform; and that humility and repentance are the feelings which become him, when he compares his duty with his practice.

We know, however, that the will of God is to be discovered infinitely more clearly and fully from revelation, than it possibly can be discovered by inferences from the course of nature. And although the deist may refuse his assent to this truth, yet is he bound to avail himself of all the helps he can derive from that system of religion and morals which is received by those around him as a revelation from God. He is bound, in the first place, not to reject its pretensions without due examination; not to adopt the objections which may be made to its authenticity, hastily, and without full investigation; but to divest his mind of prejudice, to examine it with impartiality, and to give their due weight to the proofs and arguments in its favour.

And here, can I help remarking, how contrary this course is, though most obviously their duty, to the practice of unbelievers in general? How many do we see adopting the doubts of the sceptic with an eagerness and precipitancy, which mark their prejudice, and even enmity, to religion! How many affect to be infidels, even before they know what are the chief objections to Christianity, or the real difficulties experienced in its defence! Although the wisest and most learned men, for eighteen hundred years together, have been found in the number of firm believers in the Christian revelation; men whose strength of understanding secured them from the imputation of credulity, whose tried integrity would have kept them from countenancing an imposture, and whose whole lives were spent in the acquisition of knowledge:—although a cloud of these witnesses to the credibility of the Gospel might be brought forward; yet men, even beardless youths, whose only pursuits have been those of dissipation and debauchery; even illiterate mechanics, may be seen eager to contemn and reject the Gospel of Christ, to assert when they cannot argue, to revile where they cannot confute, and to blaspheme what they cannot understand. Nor is this criminal conduct confined to such persons. Hear even the grave philosopher Franklin, whose life appears to have been spent in scientific investigation, but who was a professed unbeliever in Christianity, and had done much to make others so too, acknowledging to Dr. Priestley, "that he had not given so much attention as he ought to the evidences of Christianity," and desiring him "to recommend a few treatises on the subject." "But I do not believe," adds Dr. Priestley, "that he ever found himself at leisure for the discussion *." This, then, is the conduct which is justly to be condemned in the adversaries of revelation; not so much their unbelief, as the cause of their unbelief—their prejudice, their partiality, their unwillingness to be convinced, their evident desire to continue unbelievers.

But even if, after an impartial examination into the evidences of Christianity, (if we can suppose such a case) a deist should not be convinced of its truth, yet this effect at least ought to follow, That since Christianity undoubtedly sets forth a purer system of moral conduct than was known before, every one is bound to seek after that purity (unless, after very serious examination, it should not appear to be agreeable to the will of God), even though he should reject the sanctions which establish it. It matters little from what source truth comes

* Christian Observer for July, p. 451.

to us. If we could learn from a heathen a purer and juster system of moral conduct than we had before, we should be bound to adopt it, though we might not believe that it proceeded from any higher source than a clear and correct understanding. In like manner, all that deists learn of purity and holiness, even from those writings which they are pleased to term superstitious, they are clearly bound to practise, unless, after serious consideration, they are conscientiously persuaded, that to do so would not be pleasing to God, useful to mankind, and beneficial to themselves.

I would remark, lastly, that every conscientious deist ought to pray to the Supreme Being earnestly, humbly, and constantly, that he may know his will, and be enabled to perform it. I know the objections which have been made to the use of prayer. But when a revelation pretends to be given by God, in which his help is expressly promised, thus far at least ought those to go who think the evidence for the truth of that revelation defective; they ought to pray to the Supreme Being, that if he does hear prayer, and reveal himself to men, he would be pleased not to suffer him to remain in darkness, but would help him to know the truth, whatever it might be. The very possibility of God's revealing his will, and giving assistance to his creatures, not only justifies such an application, but renders those blameable who refuse to employ this, as well as every other means, of attaining an increase of knowledge and strength.

Such then, I apprehend, are the duties which, in the case of one who rejects revelation, follow from the single article of the belief of a God, and which would not fail to be performed by him, if he had only an upright mind and a sincere desire to please God. Is there then no guilt in neglecting all these duties? Does that man deserve no punishment from the hand of God, who not only pours contempt on the revelation of his will, supposing him to have made one, but does not act up, or even aim at acting up, to the duties imposed on him by his own acknowledged principles? He who rejects Christianity, thereby professes himself to have a purer light and more wisdom than that religion can give. Christianity, with him, is superstition; and those who receive it he regards as credulous and deficient in knowledge. But does not his assumption of greater light increase, instead of diminishing, his responsibility? Ought not his practice to be purer, and more upright, in proportion to his clearer knowledge and more improved understanding? For if his greater knowledge do not lead to greater virtue, wherein consists its value? The truth, I fear, will be found to be, that the great mass of those who reject Christianity, assume the profession of infidelity as affording a greater licence to sin: they hope that they may indulge their passions with more freedom, when they have rid their minds of the restraints which a belief of the Gospel imposes. But in this hope I have shewn that they are clearly mistaken, and that right reason points out the necessity of their resisting and subduing every vicious propensity, and cultivating every virtuous disposition and habit.

I would remark, in conclusion, that all rational creatures are under the government of God, and bound to obey his laws, whether they be more or less plainly promulged; whether made known by the light of reason, or by revelation. Man may reject them; but he cannot escape their penalties. He may glory in the freedom he fancies himself to have obtained by casting off the restraints of Christianity; but he is not at all the more free. In fact, his obligations continue as binding as ever, while, by excluding himself from the privileges of the Gospel dispensation, he abridges his means of fulfilling them. All men are bound to serve God to the utmost of their power and knowledge. It is a

vain hope to divest themselves of responsibility. They must all, one day, give in their account to God. But who is there who acts up to the extent of his power and knowledge? And if it must be allowed that guilt on this ground attaches even to him who shuts out all light but that of nature, how much more guilty will those be deemed, who, though they superadd the light of divine revelation, yet are not engaged in glorifying God and fulfilling his will? If the single truth of God's existence imposes such serious obligations upon us, requiring us to love and serve God with all our powers; how much more binding do those obligations become in the case of such as acknowledge themselves to have been bought with the precious blood of the Son of God, and who look forward to that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for them, "that he might redeem them from all iniquity, and purify them unto himself."

N. D.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

MANY of your pages have lately been occupied by a discussion of the date, from which the grand prophetical period of twelve hundred and sixty days or years are to be reckoned. Perhaps in the present state of the question the following short extract from Rapin's History of England, written of course without any reference to this inquiry, may be interesting. It is taken from his account of the state of the church of Kent in the latter part of the third book.

C. C.

"Gregoire Prémier n'avait pas prétendu à la jurisdiction sur les eglises de Bretagne, en qualité d'évêque universel. L'était un titre, pour lequel il avait témoigné de l'horreur, bien-loin de l'avoir recherché. Mais, selon les apparences, il avait cru, que, comme patriarche de l'occident, il pouvait légitimement prétendre, que tant les Bretons que les Anglais fussent soumis à sa jurisdiction spirituelle. Mais Boniface Quatre, qui peu de tems après Gregoire Prémier fut placé sur le même siége, se trouvant appuyé par l'empereur Phocas, prît le titre d'evêque universel. Ce fut là un nouveau motif pour les missionaires Romains, qui étaient en Angleterre, de faire de nouveaux efforts pour porter les Bretons à reconnaitre son autorité."

MISCELLANEOUS.

ON THE PROBABLE DESIGN OF PROVIDENCE IN SUBJECTING INDIA TO GREAT BRITAIN.

No. II.

On those features of the dispensation that has subjected India to Great Britain, from which the design of Providence may be inferred.

THE point being ascertained, that it is the design of Providence ultimately to evangelize India, the question is, whether the probable crisis is arrived when it is intended this conversion should begin. Now, in the works of art, if the ultimate design of the artist is known, we conclude, when we see the materials and the instrument adapted to them brought together, that the commencement of the work is intended. Surely, then, as in this particular case we know the ultimate design of Providence, much may be inferred, as to his immediate design, from seeing India thus singularly subjected to that power

of the world best calculated, and best disposed, to spread the knowledge of Christianity. Before this argument, however, can have much weight, it is necessary to prove that Great Britain is of all nations the fittest instrument of such a design.

I. It will be readily admitted, that political subjection to any other than a Christian power would have intimated this to be the least auspicious moment for the introduction of Christianity. Political supremacy, indeed, seldom operates exclusively in its own province: it is felt through every department: and, in general, the sovereign, if not nominally, yet really becomes the head of the church. It is true, indeed, that some few cases may be alleged, where the victors have received the religion of their captives. The idolatry, for instance, of the barbarian conquerors of Rome, soon melted down into the religion of their conquest, purifying itself but debasing Christianity in the process. But these cases are exceedingly rare, and are all of them marked by sufficient peculiarities to explain their discordance with the general rule. Indeed, any acquaintance with man would lead us to expect that in a state of captivity he would not long refuse at least the form of the religion followed by his master. When the road to preferment lies through the church, it will generally throng with worshippers. Besides, what is not sacrificed to views of interest, will often be yielded upon fairer grounds. Conquest implies superiority; and the conquered, without analysing the sources of this superiority, often embrace by degrees the practice and opinions of their victors, as those the possession of which enabled others to conquer, and the want of which occasioned themselves to fall. The desire of honour, therefore, and the sense of inferiority, will thus, in the case of India, equally minister to the cause of Christianity.

But these observations would apply to any other *conqueror* as well as the *Christian*: his *religion, however, is peculiarly fitted to follow up every conquest the sword has achieved.*

Every ancient system of paganism, and indeed every modern system, which prevails in states at all civilized, as it was originally constructed by the legislator for the particular state which he governed, is adapted to it, and to it alone, by various local peculiarities. Even Judaism, as a system designed for partial dominion, was narrowed down by its divine author to suit the territory it was to rule. Christianity, on the contrary, not being the fabrication of a legislator to govern a single state, nor a dispensation of God limited in its operations to a particular sphere, is free from all such peculiarities. It cautiously avoids all detail. It gives few specific laws or express directions; but establishes principles out of which laws adapted to all possible cases must necessarily arise Rather than encumber itself with rules which would not admit of universal application, it is often silent where we should have expected it so speak; and the church of Christ actually grew up amidst institutions hostile to itself and to happiness, without denouncing them as guilty or absurd. The regulations of other religions proclaim the soil from which they sprung, and unfit them for dominion in any other. A religion, for instance, which forbids the eating of swine, is indeed suited to a country where swine are scarce; where their flesh is unwholesome, and their maintenance expensive; but cannot thrive where the God of nature has made them a nutritious, cheap, and abundant food. Hindostan, also, may embrace a religion that forbids the eating of cattle, for which, in general, their pastures are unfit, and their constitutions unadapted; but the fat levels of Flanders would at once discover that such a system was not designed for them. Persia, in the same manner, might religiously

pledge herself to hate the oar and the sail, for which her inhabitants have a natural abhorrence, and her territory a singular inaptitude; but Great Britain would spurn such a system, as thwarting the ruling passion of her people, and drying up the great source of her prosperity. Christianity, on the contrary, has nothing singular in its complexion; nothing racy in its flavour; nothing that need exclude it from a single spot of the creation, or unfit its followers to be citizens of the world.—The mere circumstance, then, that India is subjected to a Christian power, indicates this to be a probable crisis for the introduction of Christianity.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE rise and progress of the negro republic in Hayti have naturally attracted much of the public curiosity; but various circumstances have contributed to involve the history of its affairs in doubt and obscurity. We knew in general, notwithstanding the misrepresentations of American traders and West-Indian planters, that, conducted by Toussaint L'Ouverture, himself an enfranchised negro, the negroes of S. Domingo, after ten years of revolutionary warfare, in which the horrors exhibited in France were re-acted, had achieved their deliverance from domestic bondage, and had become united, under the government of that hero*. In the year 1802, this island was admitted, by Bonaparte himself, to have advanced in wealth and general prosperity, in consequence of the wise institutions of Toussaint; and it appears, from unquestionable documents, that that great man was no less anxious to promote the interests of religion and morality among his brethren, than he was to assert their freedom and to advance their temporal welfare.

While things were in this state, the peace of Amiens gave Bonaparte an opportunity of attempting to restore the ancient system of slavery in S. Domingo. The issue of this attempt is well known, and that island is now, probably for ever, separated from France.

Thus much I thought it necessary to premise, before I introduced to your notice, and that of your readers, some interesing details respecting the affairs of S. Domingo, which have been obtained from a most authentic source. The respectable individual (Mr. ——) by whom these details were communicated, quitted the island about the beginning of the year 1806, after a continued residence of seven or eight years, comprising, of course, the whole eventful period which elapsed from the arrival of the French expedition under Le Clerc, to the evacuation of the island by Rochambeau; the time of the massacre by Dessalines; and, in short, the whole era of that darkness which French despotism and French imposture have spread over the history of S. Domingo. His opportunities of information were very great, having constantly lived at the seat of government, and in habits of intimacy with all the negro chiefs. The intelligence thus obtained, and on the accuracy of which I myself place the fullest reliance, I purpose to lay before your readers in a series of papers: the whole of it, let it be remembered, refers to a period prior to the year 1806.

I remain, &c.

B.

MEMORANDA RESPECTING HAYTI.

Toussaint.

Mr. —— confirms in all points those honourable and interesting accounts of that extraordinary man's general character and conduct, which we have had through so

* Various notices respecting S. Domingo and Toussaint have been inserted in the former volumes of the Christian Observer, and may be found by a reference to the Indexes. See particularly vol. for 1803, p. 554.

many channels, public and private. There is so perfect a uniformity between them, with the exception alone of the apologists of Bonaparte's perfidy towards him, that it is needless to minute much of what he said on this subject*. In confirmation of Toussaint's reputation for piety, Mr. —— says he had prayers in a private chapel morning and evening; the former at a very early hour; and never, without necessity, was absent from them. A public mass was also celebrated twice a week in the town, which he as punctually attended. He rebuilt, at an immense expense, the large and ruined church at Cape François: and, as a trait of his interest in such matters, when Jacomel, or some other place, I am uncertain which, wanted to have a free port, which he had, on political views, refused, the municipality carried their point by subscribing three or four thousand dollars towards the expense of the above favourite work.

Of his justice and heroic firmness, Mr. —— gave me a signal instance, in that treatment of general Moise, and many subordinate officers, of which we heard just before Le Clerc's expedition†. The French gazettes did not fail to blazon, in the most exaggerated terms, a revolt and insurrection of that black general and his army, and the sanguinary executions which followed by order of Toussaint; yet they did not expressly impute cruelty to his conduct: they even did not cease to proclaim his virtues, until the tyrant, having found him incorruptible, ordered them to prepare the public mind, by calumnies and abuse, for the perfidious murder that was decreed for him. But the story was so told as to convey the ideas of great barbarity and insubordination in Moise's party, unrelenting vengeance in that of Toussaint, and a dreadful state of manners in both.

As the speedy sequel shewed that Toussaint's destruction was doomed, it was natural to regard this whole story as one of those vile inventions which Bonaparte always deals in, in order to anticipate an excuse for his crimes. But I found from Mr. —— the true point in which those accounts were defective and fallacious. They *honestly* concealed, that Touissant's rigour on this occasion was in pursuance of his humane and unalterable purpose to protect the French from the resentment and violence of his brethren. Moise, and many officers and troops under his command, had revolted, not with views hostile to Toussaint and his government, as the French accounts imported, but solely to indulge their vengeance against the whites, a great many of whom they put to death.

It was on this account that Toussaint became for once severe and inexorable. He acted on this, as on other occasions, a Roman part, without disparagement to his Christian feelings. Moise was his nephew, his confidential friend, his second in command: yet he brought him, and about thirty of his officers, to a court-martial, to answer for their bloody conduct; and on their conviction ordered them, though with the deepest concern, to be publicly executed at the Cape. Mr. —— was present at their execution. It was a dreadful example, which cost much, he said, to the feelings of Toussaint; but it was absolutely necessary, in order to protect those from further violence to whom his faith and his humanity were pledged. He shed the kindred blood that was dear to him, in order to protect those very French, most of whom afterwards abetted or applauded his murderer.

This fact was not forgotten by the successors of Toussaint, Christophe, when afterwards reproached as a rebel in the colonial assembly, ably and manfully reminded the planter, who now, under the protection of a French army was base

* See Christ. Obs.; vol. for 1803, p. 554; and for 1804, p. 677.

† See Christ. Obs. for 1802, p. 201.

enough so to revile him, of the deliverance they had had from Moise, on which occasion Christophe himself had been greatly instrumental in disarming and seizing the offenders. Mr. —— was present in the colonial assembly when this conversation took place, and was charmed with the spirit and force of the retort. But Dessalines, a character of a very different kind from Toussaint, and even from Christophe, remembered this aggravation of the ingratitude and perfidy to which his former chief had fallen a victim, for a less generous purpose. He used it as one strong argument to justify his copying the vengeance of Moise rather than the humanity of Toussaint. Thus does righteous Heaven sometimes discover to us the exactness of a dreadful retribution.

An account is given in the Christian Observer for 1803, p. 557, of an attempt made by Le Clerc to gain Toussaint to his master's views, by practising on his feelings of parental affection. His two sons were sent to him, along with their tutor Coisnon, under a promise that they should be re-conveyed to the French camp; and as Coisnon did not succeed in the object of his mission, which was to detach the father from the cause of negro freedom, they were unrelentingly torn from his embrace, and carried back to Cape François, Toussaint heroically observing the faith of war in permitting their return.

The pretended dispatches of Le Clerc, which were doubtless forged at Paris, affirmed that the young men had afterwards been restored to their father. This, however, proves to be one of the numberless falsehoods published at that time by Bonaparte. They were carried off by the French, and have never since been heard of. Mr. —— doubts not that they, as well as the wife* and younger children, have shared the father's fate. Bonaparte seems to have been afraid that any of Toussaint's family should remain to keep alive the memory of that true heroism by which his own bastard greatness was contrasted and shamed.

Toussaint had another nephew, general Bellair, who, with his wife, were among the multitudes put to death in cold blood by Le Clerc and the monster Rochambeau. They were shot at the brink of a pit near Cape François, of which I shall hereafter have to speak. There is not now, I believe, one member of Toussaint's family surviving. They have all died by violent and cruel means.

Mr. —— bore the strongest testimony to the loyal disposition of Toussaint, if adherence to the successive governments of the parent state was loyalty. The surprise he felt at the ingratitude of his country was very great, and he hesitated whether to resist Le Clerc, till he found his object was the restitution of slavery. And when, after conquering his enemies, he had made that treaty with them which they had the impudence to call in Europe a surrender, he disinterestedly retired into private life. The perfidy which afterwards led to his seizure was too gross to be suspected by him. Le Clerc sent a strong body of troops by night to the neighbourhood of his country-house, near Gonaive; surrounded him, while engaged in an amicable conference with the commander; seized and sent him on board a frigate; and dispatched him immediately to France.

(To be continued.)

* The account given of this woman's fate, Christian Observer for 1804, p. 675, is of course unfounded.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It cannot but have occurred to you, that the comfort, if not the profit, of congregations, is much invaded by the coughing which prevails in our churches. Without wishing, by any means, to go the length of some, in requiring that such persons as have

coughs should absent themselves from church, I cannot avoid thinking, that much might be done by those really afflicted with this malady, and more by those not at all afflicted with it, to prevent the annoyance to a minister and a congregation which we find so generally complained of. Such persons as cannot avoid coughing, should (if I may so express myself) *learn to cough*, by choosing those favourable moments when a preacher arrives at the end of a sentence or period; and such are constantly occurring. The power of the bishop of London over his congregation, in the course of his Lent Lectures, was remarkable, and affords an instance of what I mean. They were preached to the most crowded auditories, and at a period of the year very unfavourable to those whose lungs are not of the strongest structure; yet such was the interest with which that good and amiable prelate was heard, that attention was completely suspended, and the most profound silence prevailed through his different periods, till he arrived at their conclusion, when a general coughing, as if by common consent, or upon an appointed signal, immediately took place.

Much is to be done also, among those really afflicted, by *moderating* a cough; and this appears to be a duty to others, as well as suspending it. There are many who are not careful to make the best of their misfortunes in this way, and who seem to think they shall claim the more pity in proportion as they are better heard.

But there is still another class of coughers, and by far, in my opinion, the most numerous, who cough without occasion and without thought. Of this class are many young persons, especially children, who might often be checked in the indulgence of so idle a habit by those of their friends who are with them. It may be truly asserted, that by far the greater part of the coughing which disturbs our audiences is *the consequence of inattention to the duties of the place and the business of the hour.* If these idle hearers did not cough, they would gape; for if the mind does not take an interest in what is before it, it will be finding employment for the body. There is no desire in such persons to avoid the offensive habit of which I complain, and no effort made by them against its indulgence. Like any other trick, it therefore gains upon them, till they are unconscious when they are offending by it: and it has this of evil in it, beyond many other tricks, that it must be *heard*, whereas most bad habits are no longer disagreeable than while they are *seen*: and it is easier to turn away the eyes than to shut the ears.

I am inclined, sir, to think, that neither you nor your readers will be disposed to regard the evil in question as one of a slight nature. It were, indeed, sincerely to be wished that we were not so easily diverted and distracted in our attention, by the constant noise which is thus kept up about us through the time of divine service, and that we could more easily abstract our minds from the interruption thus (for the most part *unnecessarily*) given; but such, alas! is our infirmity, and our proneness to suffer distraction from external causes, that every one, who is able only to suggest a hint towards the preservation of tranquillity in the house of God, will perhaps be found to be doing something to facilitate the great end which every true Christian must have in view in attending divine worship on earth, which is, that of assimilating such a service, as nearly as our present imperfections will permit, to the glorious and unsullied worship of a better and more enduring state of existence. I am, &c.

LAICUS.

VACCINATION.

Considerable alarm having been excited by reports of supposed failures in vaccination at Cambridge, Mr. Ring and Mr. Blair, two surgeons of

London, proceeded thither for the purpose of investigating those reports. The following is the general result of their inquiry.

The small pox had been prevalent and fatal at Cambridge, for ten weeks before: during this period a considerable number of children, vaccinated at different times, had been much exposed to infection, which they had resisted. But in numerous instances small pox was supposed to have occurred after vaccination. In many of them all doubts had been removed; but sixteen cases were deemed still deserving of investigation. In some of these vaccination had not taken effect at all; yet these were reckoned among the failures. In others, the chicken pox was mistaken for the small pox; the chicken pox, as well as the small pox, having for some time prevailed at Cambridge. In two cases, the patients were inoculated for the small pox in the manner of a seton, 'by a bone-setter, who was formerly a grocer,' together with two of his own children: the small pox appeared in these four cases, and proved fatal in one of them. Then, and not till then he pretended that he had not inoculated the children for the small pox, but for the cow pock! When a child was inoculated for the cow pock without effect, and afterwards successfully inoculated for the small pox, this was represented to be a failure in vaccination. And when another child, who had been vaccinated, was afterwards seized with a fever without eruptions, this also was represented to be a failure in vaccination!—Having such prejudices to encounter, it is no wonder that failures were supposed to be frequent; but after a minute and careful inquiry it did not appear that a single case of the small pox occurred there, after regular and complete vaccination. In this inquiry the deputation of the Royal Jennerian Society were assisted by two eminent surgeons of Cambridge, who have had a considerable share in the practice of vaccination, one of them having vaccinated three thousand persons; and the notes of every case, submitted to their investigation, were read to the parents themselves, or to the parties concerned, to prevent the possibility of mistake.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE following Hymn, composed by the poet Cowper for the anniversary of the establishment of Sunday Schools at Olney, and, perhaps, not ill calculated for general use on such anniversaries in other parishes, has never, I believe, appeared in print. If you agree with me in thinking the publication of it desirable, it is very much at your service. Its tendency is, certainly, the same with that of the other productions of his pen. And its internal evidence, as to authorship, is so strong, that it is perhaps unnecessary for me to say I transcribe a copy sent by Mrs. Unwin, in her own hand-writing, to her daughter Mrs. Powley.

I am, sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Ossett, Aug. 16. E. KILVINGTON.

HYMN.

HEAR, Lord! the song of praise and pray'r
In heav'n, thy dwelling-place,
From children made the public care,
And taught to seek thy face.

Thanks for thy word, and for thy day;
And grant us, we implore,
Never to waste in sinful play
Thy holy Sabbaths more.

Thanks that we hear—but O impart
To each desires sincere,
That we may listen with our *hearts*,
And *learn*, as well as hear!

For if vain thoughts the mind engage
Of elder far than we,
What hope, that at our heedless age
Our minds should e'er be free?

Much hope—if Thou our spirits take
Under thy gracious sway,
Who can'st the wisest wiser make,
And babes as wise as they.

Wisdom and bliss thy word bestows,
A sun that ne'er declines;
And be thy mercy show'r'd on those
Who plac'd us where it shines!

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

An Account of the Life and Writings of David Hume, Esq. By THOMAS EDWARD RICHIE. London, Cadell and Co. 1807. Pp. 520. Price 10s. 6d.

THE present are times in which a man, who excels half a dozen of his neighbours in any respect, is almost certain of either the happiness or the misfortune of living two lives upon earth. Of the second of these some have been so enamoured, and jealous at the same time, as not to leave the important task of giving it existence to the doubtful zeal and partiality of surviving friends; but have made sure of their point, by becoming their own biographers. This is the case with the subject of the present memoir; and every general reader is sufficiently acquainted with "My Own Life," prefixed to a History of England by David Hume, Esq. This short outline, although it undoubtedly had the merit of satisfying its author, and, with the additions of a very sanguine friend, might be deemed sufficient to satisfy all who were attached to him and his cause, has not perfectly met and allayed the curiosity of a later posterity. Of this curiosity we must confess ourselves to be in some degree partakers; and, although we cannot say that the third existence which is given to Mr. Hume, in the publication before us, is in every respect such as we could have desired, we have the satisfaction of informing Mr. Richie, that we have read his work not only with interest and pleasure, but we may add, with improvement — although possibly not of the precise kind which the biographer intended to convey. The reflection, however, may be equally grateful to him, whether he be the direct cause or the oblique occasion of doing good.

We beg leave to dissent from it, as an universal proposition, that, in determining concerning any sentiment or collection of sentiments, all consideration of the author should be laid aside, and that our whole attention should be directed to what is said, not who says it. In particular cases this impersonality (if we may so use the term) may be of service, or even essential, to a just judgment. But in others, we do not hesitate to declare our opinion, that a consideration of the speaker contributes very materially to an accurate decision concerning what is spoken. Wherever we must depend upon an author (and this is done to a great, we had almost said unlimited, degree in history and biography), it is of importance, corresponding to the nature of the subject, for us to know, whether he has partialities; what those partialities are; whether he attempts to resist them, and how far he succeeds in that attempt. These, and other like circumstances, when known, must have, and ought to have, a considerable influence upon the mind of the reader; and, by a judicious regard to them, he may be able to rectify some false impressions. Those who write the lives of others, are, in general, induced to undertake the task from friendship, if not for their persons, for their general character and principles. Some few pieces of biography have, indeed, been composed upon the unnatural principle of hostility: but as the end of the writer is little likely to be attained by this mean, it is seldom resorted to. We would, however, by no means rely upon so precarious a foundation for determining the principles of the present writer: we would refer to his own evidence on this question. Now that Mr. Richie agrees with Mr. Hume in his regards toward revela-

tion, appears probable, from his steady omission of any declaration to the contrary. This negative argument is strengthened by the circumstance, that the biographer has very freely and frequently controverted some of the principles of his subject. But some occasional expressions put this matter beyond all reasonable doubt. We will produce what have struck us. In p. 49, speaking of a work of Mr. Balfour against Mr. Hume, he calls it "this pious specimen of his erudition." Our readers need not be informed what *pious* means here. Again, p. 59, we read, that "Mr. George Anderson, the literary champion of the fanatics, published a pamphlet, under the title of *Infidelity a proper Object of Censure*. It is replete with religious dogmatism, and constantly appealing to the Bible, the usual resource of the priest in every difficulty." In p. 71, "the redoubted Mr. George Anderson" is brought forward again. And, in p. 82, our author writes thus of Mr. Daniel M'Queen's Letters on Mr. Hume's History of Great Britain: "The letters are sufficiently learned, and shew great extent of reading, but savour too much of the whining piety of a cleric, and, with respect to manner and style, are intolerably prolix and diffuse *." With the liberality of these passages we have, at present, no concern: and we admit, that as no faith is to be kept with the church of Rome's heretics, it is equally reasonable, that no justice should be allowed to Mr. Richie's fanatics. From the specimens just given of our biographer's sentiments and affections, it might be expected that he would say nothing of his hero but in terms of panegyric, if need be, of apology. But this is not the fact: on the contrary, he has often surprised us by the freedom, as well as justice, of the censures which he has passed on the subject of his story. In some instances he has gone as far in this way, as we, with all *our prejudices*, should have gone. There is a note, p. 4, which certainly sets the general impartiality of Mr. Richie in a strong light.

"In the hope," says he, "of being enabled to fill up any chasm in this narrative, I applied to a near relation of Mr. Hume, and was told, that if the work was to advance his fame, and a copy of the manuscript furnished to the family, the information wanted would, perhaps, be supplied. With such conditions I refused compliance, choosing rather to remain satisfied with the little I had otherwise obtained, than to fetter my sentiments, and subject myself to so laborious a task, in return for what was probably of little importance."

Not to move the question, whether the hope of some materials of greater importance would have affected the determination of our author, we shall only observe, upon this passage, the kind of confidence in the truth which it discovers the friends of Mr. Hume to have with respect to his character *.

We now proceed to the narrative. What is contained in Mr. Hume's own account of himself is so generally known, that it will be unnecessary to repeat any part of it, unless there should be some particular occasion. David Hume, the second son of Joseph Hume, Esq., was born at Edinburgh, April 26, O.S. 1711. There was nothing remarkable in his juvenile years; and about the age of twenty-eight he became an author. It is in this capacity alone that any importance attaches to his life: his literary productions and character, therefore, together with such considerations as elucidate or influence either the one or the other, will be the exclusive subject of our strictures. In the year 1739, or, as Mr. Richie more correctly states, the end of the foregoing one, Mr. Hume gave his first

* Several other instances might be adduced. See the observation concerning lord Hailes, p. 103.

* If, as we suspect, the sale of this work has not been very rapid, the cause may perhaps be found in its too strict adherence to truth on some subjects involving the credit of Mr. Hume.

work to the public. It was entitled "A Treatise of Human Nature, being an Attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects." The first two volumes, then published, treat, the former of the Understanding, the other of the Passions. The third, on Morals, did not appear until the year 1740.

Mr. Richie was not so happy in collecting materials for this part of his narrative as he might have been. In Lord Woodhouselee's Life of Lord Kaimes, formerly, and before he took his title as lord of session, Mr. Home, are inserted several letters of Hume to this celebrated philosopher and judge. The earlier of them throw some interesting light on the literary *début* of the young and enterprising philosopher. The first is dated from London, December 2, 1737, when his first work was upon the eve of making its appearance. "The nearness and greatness of the event" gave him disturbance; and as he was busily employed in making all the alterations which could contribute to its perfection or popularity, he prevailed upon himself to cut off what he calls "its nobler parts," that it might give as little offence as possible. "I was resolved," says he, "not to be an enthusiast in philosophy, while I was blaming other enthusiasms." It is a curious fact, that, in this letter, Mr. Hume wishes to be introduced to Dr. Butler, who had already acquired celebrity by his Sermons and his incomparable Analogy. In his next letter, March 4, 1737-8, he expresses his anxiety to have the doctor's opinion of his work, and is much agitated with respect to its reception. "Sometimes," says he, "it elevates me above the clouds; at other times it depresses me with doubts and fears; so that," &c. After the publication of the important work, its author, Feb. 13, 1739, announces the event to his friend, and mentions his purpose of leaving London; because, he writes, "besides many other considerations, I thought it would contribute very much to my tranquillity, and might spare me many mortifications, to be in the country while the success of the work was doubtful." That there was sufficient ground for these emotions, even in the breast of a philosopher, will appear from the opinion which the parent entertained of his infant production. "My principles," he proceeds, at a short distance from the passage last quoted, "are also so remote from all the vulgar sentiments on the subject, that were they to take place, they would produce almost a total alteration in philosophy: and, you know, revolutions of this kind are not easily brought about. I am young enough to see what will become of the matter;" &c. He mentions his having sent a copy of the work to the bishop of Bristol, Dr. Butler, who was consecrated in 1738.

To say nothing of the want of delicacy, with respect to such a man as Dr. Butler, which is implied in these communications, we will content ourselves with calling the attention of our readers to the conceit and presumption betrayed in the passages just quoted. A young man of twenty-eight years of age intimates, in his first work, the possibility of its producing an entire revolution in the philosophical sentiments of the public. And that the reader may be sensible how inseparable the above-mentioned qualities were from his intellectual constitution, or how stedfastly he adhered to the rule of the great critic—

Servetur ad *imum*,
Qualis ab *incœpto* processerit, et sibi constet,

the same expectation is recorded among the pleasantries of his dying moments. But the world was in no humour for a revolution at the time; and Mr. Hume's work was received with perfect contempt: an event which, as might be expected, gave the fond author no little chagrin. This is forcibly expressed in another letter to Mr. Home, dated from Ninewells, his family residence,

June 1, 1789. The consequence of this neglect was a revolution in the structure of his work: for, some years after, he re-modelled the whole treatise, throwing it into the form of Essays, expunging many of the errors and absurdities, with some of the honest avowals too, of the original work; and, in an Advertisement prefixed to the transformed performance, absolutely disavows the former; at the same time, peevishly, and most disingenuously, reproaching his antagonists for directing all their batteries against a juvenile work, which, as he affirms, "the author never acknowledged," *i. e.* it was printed without his name. Mr. Richie is quite of our judgment here; and he has well exposed the absurdity of Mr. Hume's being angry with his opponents for attacking the only work, which, till then, it was in their power to attack. We shall take our leave, therefore, of this treatise, by merely directing any of our readers, who may be curious on the subject, to what we esteem the best part—namely, that which is calculated to operate as an antidote to the rest, by exhibiting it in its true, but in the most melancholy and disheartening colours. It stands at the conclusion of the first book. And that such of our readers as will excuse themselves the trouble of referring to these murky volumes, may not be dismissed without some specimen of the *sobriety* at least of the author, we transcribe the following passage. "The intense view of these manifold contradictions and imperfections in human reason has so wrought upon me, and heated my brain, that I am ready to reject all belief and reasoning, and can look upon no opinion even as more probable or likely than another."

Here Mr. Richie digresses into a history of metaphysics, and infers the incompetency of our author for the Herculean task which he had undertaken; charging him, at the same time, with want of candour, in making no references, of which he is sometimes profuse, to his predecessors*.

In 1742 the Essays Moral and Philosophical appeared, and were more favourably received by the public. In 1747 his aspiring but unfortunate Treatise assumed the new form and title of an Inquiry concerning Human Understanding: but all would not rouse the attention of the public. In 1751 both his Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals, and his Political Discourses, were published. The last met with a flattering reception. Soon after this, a variety of writers drew their pens against our author: to one only of whom, Mr. James Balfour, he *condescended*, as Mr. Richie says, to reply. The letter which he wrote to his opponent, then unknown, is handsome, but evasive; and in the close, the consistent sceptic intimates his philosophical system to be fixed. In 1754 the first volume of his History of Great Britain was given to the world.

About this time, the professorship of moral philosophy in the university of Edinburgh having become vacant, Mr. Hume offered himself a candidate for the chair. As the friends of Christianity might have about the same objection to a deist and sceptic's teaching morality, as Mr. Hume would probably have to being lectured by a presbyterian fanatic or bigot, they exerted themselves, and procured the disappointment of his hopes. "Their remonstrances," says our biographer, "succeeded; but the event gave rise to a rooted antipathy on the part of Hume towards the Scottish clergy." p. 49. This is a remarkable declaration, and, we presume, generally speaking, accurate. That it is perfectly so, we have our doubts. His antipathy to the clergy of his country, as far as their character and conduct were

* As it is not our wish to load the memory of Mr. Hume with any thing uncertain, we pass over the story in the note, pp. 29, 30.

identified with the religion they taught, was, we are fully persuaded, much anterior to this time. Nothing goads and irritates the mind of an irreligious man more, than to live in the society of those who are really religious; much more, if he be obliged to join in any acts of religion. The approximation or contact of these opposite substances produces a powerful, although perhaps smothered, effervescence in the mind. The hour of emancipation, and the attendant opportunity of reprisals, are looked forward to with delight; and, when that hour arrives, full advantage is taken of it. We have no doubt, however, that the antipathy of Hume, which had an earlier and deeper root, was much inflamed, and struck its fibres with more obstinate vigour in a soil by no means unfavourable, on account of the circumstance which has been mentioned. A laudable inducement, truly, for a man to bend all his talents and strength against every species of religion!

After relating some immaterial or well-known circumstances of Mr. Hume's life, our author now comes to the first of two important ones, which are specified in the preface as being omitted by the philosopher in his own account of himself. This is opened with some pomp. "In the mean time a storm of a more alarming tendency threatened the spiritual and temporal interests of our historian. It is in vain to conceal," (mark this) "that deism, or a religious creed approximating to it, had begun to spread among the literary circles at Edinburgh; and lord Kames and Mr. Hume, being the only persons who had ventured to commit their philosophical tenets to writing, were considered as the grand apostles of infidelity."

But soft—by regular approach—not yet—

The northern zealots were encouraged to their attack upon these apostles, by a similar attack upon a similar apostle in the south, which seems to have been attended with circumstances of peculiar atrocity; for the learned world, we are told, beheld it "with astonishment, indignation, and dismay." p. 53. The reader should prepare his mind for at least thumb-screws, the rack, the Scotch boot, if not for fire and faggot. His sensibility, however, will find a happy escape, when he learns, that this formidable affair was nothing more than the presentment, with an expression of censure, of the philosophical works of lord Bolingbroke, in 1754 (three years after the death of that nobleman), by the grand jury of Middlesex. This procedure, however, encouraged the general assembly convened at Edinburgh, May 22, 1755, to issue a like public censure upon the authors whom they conceived to head and represent the antichristian body which was rising among them; and accordingly, on the 28th May, an overture, or motion, was unanimously passed into an act, expressing the abhorrence which the assembly entertained of some late publications, and recommending it to the clergy to resist their diffusion. The session, however, being short, any farther notice of the affair was postponed to the next meeting. On the 27th May, 1756, when the assemby met again, it was proposed to confine the inquiry concerning the obnoxious writings to those of one, viz. David Hume. This was strenuously opposed; but by arguments which, even according to Mr. Richie's statement, appear to be very feeble: at least his own report of the answers to them place them in this light. Some of the members insisted that Mr. Hume could in no respect be deemed a Christian, and therefore no proper subject of Christian discipline. This was a subject of curious and extended debate; and the opponents of the unbeliever fairly enough argued, that they would be satisfied, if the court would determine and publish this judgment concerning him.

Mr. Richie has the candour to observe, that "the debate was carried on with an earnestness and decency honourable to both parties." The whole affair, however, by the influence of friends to the arraigned, was quashed and brought to nothing. Mr. Hume could not treat with contempt what might be the consequences of a sentence of excommunication.

Such is the affair which, in the impassioned language of Mr. Hume's admirers, is called his persecution. Without pledging ourselves to defend temporal inflictions in cases of this sort, we think it hard indeed, if, when a person has exerted himself in a public manner to vilify and overturn the truths of religion, particularly of Christianity, the professors and friends of Christianity, as a church, should not have it in their power publicly to express their sense of such a person's proceedings, and to expel him from their society. We know not what toleration means, if this is not to be admitted; and we know no spirit or conduct which would better deserve the name of intolerance, than thus to expose the church to the insults of her enemies with her hands tied behind her. On the silence of Mr. Hume respecting this matter, we shall only observe, that it was a politic measure not to lead the minds of the public to investigate the true cause of his antipathy to Christians and Christianity.

We are obliged to pass over the entertaining account which our author has given of several literary societies, which began to be formed about this time at Edinburgh: but we stop at p. 104, to notice a misstatement. In 1757 Mr. Hume had published Four Dissertations. To the first of these, entitled the Natural History of Religion, three answers appeared, in the same and the following years. The last of these answers bore the title of Remarks upon the Natural History of Religion by Mr. Hume, with Dialogues on Heathen Idolatry and the Christian Religion. "This last tract," says Mr. Richie, "which is alluded to by our author in his own Life, was the production of Dr. Hurd, now bishop of Worcester, the friend and biographer of Warburton; and this slight mark of attention contributed to sooth the chagrin, which oppressed the breast of our historian in consequence of the cold reception of his performance." In the first place, the tract here mentioned was not the same which proceeded from Dr. Hurd. We have it now before us; and it has almost nothing in common with what is called Dr. Hurd's production, as it stands in its original state in the last volume of that prelate's edition of bishop Warburton's works. Again, the fact is, as it would have appeared to Mr. Richie had he consulted the piece of biography to which he has alluded, that Dr. Hurd's production was really that of Warburton, consisting of some rough detached observations; and that he only gave it its form and some slight connective additions. This publication was doubtless the second of those enumerated by Mr. Richie. The titles of all began with the word Remarks, and this circumstance probably led to the mistake. But is it true, as Mr. Richie affirms, that the chagrin of our philosopher was soothed by this publication? He does, indeed, himself talk of the consolation which it afforded him: but, at the same time, designates this consoling, soothing, object, by as waspish terms as his "mild disposition" and "command of temper" ever suffered to escape him. "Dr. Hurd wrote a pamphlet against it," says he, "with all the illiberal petulance, arrogance, and scurrility, which distinguish the Warburtonian school *." The philosopher, indeed, had some cause to be angry.

The years 1758 and 1759, in this biography, are chiefly occupied with Mr. Hume's part of his correspondence with Dr. Robertson. It is uninteresting, except as containing

* See "My Own Life."

some curious traits of vanity, and displaying with some parade, and much apparent self-commendation, the good terms on which he and his friend continued, in spite of their mutual temptations to indulge the passions of rivalry. A simple regard to reputation and ease would dictate such forbearance, even although we should admit it to be in no degree feigned.

In 1762, Dr. Campbell's Dissertation on Miracles, in opposition to Mr. Hume's Essay on that subject, made its appearance. A copy of the manuscript had previously been sent to Dr. Blair, with a request, that, after perusing it, he would communicate it to Mr. Hume; which he did. Hume returned it, with a letter to Blair, in which he discovers, that he still felt the lash of "Warburton and his followers," and is reduced to the necessity of saying, in his defence, that he "never knew any one that examined and deliberated about nonsense, who did not believe it before the end of his inquiries." Certainly Mr. Hume had already examined to some extent, and deliberated about, the miracles said to be wrought at the tomb of the Abbé Paris. To the observation, that the reformers did not attempt miracles, he answers, that "men must have new and opposite ways of establishing new and opposite follies;" that he never read of a miracle in his life, "that was not meant to establish some new point of religion;" and that those wrought in popish countries "are wrought to prove the efficacy of a particular crucifix or relic, which is always a new point, or" (observe) "at least not universally received." He then seems to take it amiss, that for ten or twelve pages he should be accounted an infidel. But the conclusion of this letter is of too great importance to be omitted. Having observed, that on common subjects of literature he was always pleased with the conversation of his friends, he adds, "But when the conversation was diverted by you from this channel towards the subject of your profession, though I doubt not that your intentions were very friendly towards me, I own I never received the same satisfaction: I was apt to be tired, and you to be angry. I would therefore wish, for the future, whenever my good fortune throws me in your way, that these topics should be forborne between us. I have long since done with all inquiries on such subjects, and am become incapable of instruction." This is honesty with a vengeance! Here is an inquirer after truth, who has done with all inquiries on the subject of religion, and is incapable of instruction. Here is a sceptic, whose creed, negative at least, and that is resolvable into positive, is so fixed, that all future inquiry is vain, all future instruction impossible: and *that*, not on matters of no personal or intrinsic importance, not concerning the authenticity of Ossian's Poems, or the innocence of the Scottish Mary; but whether the soul be or be not immortal, whether it will have an account to render hereafter, whether there be or be not danger of endless punishment, and whether, on the affirmative supposition, there be or be not any remedy. But admitting our philosopher, which we grant, to be incapable of instruction, had he really done with all inquiries on the subject of religion? He had not. His inquiries were urged with the zeal of a fanatic on one side of the question, for the purpose of discrediting and destroying religion; as his Dialogues on Natural Religion, left for publication after his death, and concerning which he gave particular directions in his last will and testament, plainly testify. Upon the whole, we think the declaration, upon which we have been commenting, and which, with the explanation added by us, we look upon as perfectly correct, to be the true solution of the whole problem of infidelity, and to be applicable to every individual of that persuasion.

But, to lose sight no longer of the matter in hand, we learn, that Dr.

Campbell was induced by Mr. Hume's letter to soften some passages in his Dissertation, which, in this state, and before publication, was sent to Mr. Hume. The philosopher wrote to the divine a handsome letter, which is particularly remarkable for expressing the resolution, which he says he had fixed in the beginning of his life, to make no reply to his adversaries. "I must adhere inviolably," he adds, "to this resolution, otherwise my silence on any future occasion would be construed an inability to answer, and would be matter of triumph against me." A prudent resolution, and a sufficient reason; but the former was not inviolably adhered to.

When turned fifty years of age, Mr. Hume was induced to attend the earl of Hertford, as secretary, on his embassy to France; where, he says, "I eat nothing but ambrosia, drink nothing but nectar, breathe nothing but incense, and tread on nothing but flowers." This was true; for his new friends, understanding probably what food was most to his taste, fed him—we were going to say to satiety, but this was not the case,—fed him, however, with the richest made dishes, and in all the profusion which either vanity could desire, or adulation herself provide. Our philosopher appears at his heart's ease in detailing the particulars of these entertainments to his clerical and historical friend. Pp. 154, &c.

In 1766 Hume "returned to England, where an incident happened, which he has not thought proper to notice in his own biographic narrative, but which engrossed the public attention at the time, and was certainly one of the most important occurrences in his life. We allude to his unfortunate dispute with Jean-Jaques Rousseau." Pp. 157, 158.

An account of this ridiculous affair, of which Mr. Hume was ashamed, was drawn up by him in French, and published by his friends in France, under the title of *Exposé succinct de la Contestation qui s'est élévé entre M. Hume et M. Rousseau, avec les Pieces justificatives.* The whole is included in an Appendix to the present volume. The greater part, indeed, is translated into the narrative. We will endeavour to present our readers with the substance of this amusing transaction.

So long back as the year 1762, Rousseau, who had retired to Switzerland in consequence of an *arrêt* issued by the parliament of Paris against him, was invited by Hume to his own house at Edinburgh. The invitation was not accepted at the time; till in 1765, when the English philosopher was at Paris, and repeated it, the French one was induced to avail himself of it, and they travelled together into England. After many trials of a situation, Rousseau was fixed at Wooton in Derbyshire, in a house belonging to Mr. Davenport, but little occupied by him. Here he enjoyed himself and his humours some time; and interest was made in his behalf to obtain from his majesty a pension of 100*l.* a year. The repose of Jean Jaques, however, began to be disturbed, by the appearance in the public papers of a *jeu-d'esprit* of Horace Walpole, purporting to be a letter from the king of Prussia inviting Rousseau to his dominions, at the same time rallying his eccentricities. Hume was suspected by his *protegé* to be the author, and a jealousy ensued, which was fed by many recollections. The Frenchman began to think that some unfair dealing took place with respect to the letters which passed between him and his friends; and his suspicions of a general conspiracy against him were confirmed by a delay in the publication of some letters which he had given to Mr. Becket for that purpose. These impressions were immediately circulated among his friends in France; and the whole case is detailed in a *pamphlet* of a letter, filling between thirty and forty pages, which the

injured Rousseau addressed to his former friend, and from which, in order to give the story from the most authentic source, we shall make some extracts. After some introduction, he says: "When we landed at Dover, I was transported with the thoughts of having set foot in this land of liberty, under the conduct of so celebrated a person. I threw my arms round his neck, and pressed him to my heart, without speaking a syllable; bathing his cheeks, as I kissed them, with tears sufficiently expressive. This was not the only time, nor the most remarkable instance I have given him of a heart full of sensibility." He then represents it as a piece of affectation in Mr. Hume, that he had his portrait drawn. After many other complaints, he adds: "I have always looked upon flatterers with an eye of suspicion, and he" (he speaks of his friend throughout in the third person) "was so full of all kinds of flattery, that he even obliged me, when I could bear it no longer, to tell him my sentiments on that head." He subjoins in a note, that Mr. Hume always contrived to have a volume of Eloisa on the table, when he was expected. Mr. Hume, in another note on the same place, protests that the flatteries began on the other side, and admits that he might have been too lavish of his praises, but no complaint was ever made. (These philosophers understood one another.) There was on one occasion a hideous look of Mr. Hume, which terrified the sensitive object upon which it was fixed in an extraordinary degree. The history of this look is given in three or four different letters, and it has its place here. "After supper, as we were sitting silent by the fire side," he writes, "I caught his eyes intently fixed on mine, as indeed happened very often; and that in a manner of which it is very difficult to give an idea. At that time he gave me a stedfast, piercing look, mingled with a sneer, which greatly disturbed me. To get rid of my embarrassment, I endeavoured to look full at him in my turn; but in fixing my eyes upon his, I felt the most inexpressible terror, and was soon obliged to turn them away." After inquiring where "the good David" could borrow those eyes, he observes, that his trouble was so great as to produce a degree of fainting, and floods of tears; when, feeling a portion of remorse for such a suspicion, he sprang on his friend's neck, and, "almost choked with sobbing, and bathed in tears, I cried out" (he writes) "in broken accents, *No, no, David Hume cannot be treacherous; if he be not the best of men, he must be the basest.* David Hume politely returned my embraces, and gently tapping me on the back, repeated several times, in a placid tone, *Why, what, my dear sir! Nay, my dear sir! Oh! my dear sir!* He said nothing more. I felt my heart yearn within me. We went to bed; and I set out the next day for the country." There was another circumstance which gave him great trouble, and which he did not at first know how to account for. As they were on their journey, the night after they left Paris, and were sleeping in the same room, Mr. Hume was heard to cry out several times, with great vehemence, *Je tiens J. J. Rousseau*, whether awake or asleep the writer cannot say. The significance, force, and repetition, however, of the words made him shudder at the time; and since, not a night passed without his thinking that he heard them ring in his ears. With a great deal more to a like purpose, the unhappy philosopher concludes by desiring his patron to justify himself, if he be innocent; and, if not, he bids him adieu for ever.

This letter produced an answer of exculpation from Mr. Hume, who particularly explains the hideous look, which has been mentioned, of the fixed look or stare of a thoughtful absent man, and bids his friend adieu, and for ever. Mr. Hume was induced by his friends

in France, particularly D'Alembert, to publish his account of the transaction, which he did, and took care to charge the conduct of Rousseau upon his vanity and excessive pride. The *gens de lettres* in Paris busied themselves much about the affair, and it nearly produced a quarrel between Messrs. Hume and Walpole.

Such was the event of this foolish affair, in which we certainly exonerate Mr. Hume from the greatest part of the blame, not excepting that basilisk look. But we imagine that the English philosopher was betrayed into the idle connection which he had formed, by the vanity of appearing as the patron of a celebrated and unfortunate foreigner, and by the gratification of rescuing a kindred spirit from what he would call persecution, and of exhibiting him in triumph in his own country. For we shrewdly suspect, that it would have required an inducement little short of miraculous, to have won his heart to the same kind of favour towards a person of Christian character and principles, however eminent his intellectual abilities and attainments, however unfortunate and persecuted his life, whatever affection he might discover to England, and in whatever degree he might depend upon our philosopher for his introduction and settlement in it. But be this as it may, certainly never did two human entities meet, with less probability of amalgamation, or even of peaceable juxtaposition, than Hume and Rousseau; and it would afford a subject of curious discussion, how it happens, that such an instance of weakness leaves no blot upon the sagacity of an enemy to revelation, when, in a friend to revelation, a much more excusable mistake in the estimate of character is sufficient to fix upon him the stigma of mental imbecillity for life.

As we do not pretend to give even a regular outline of the life of Mr. Hume, we pass abruptly to a letter written to Dr. Robertson, on the subject of the History of Charles V. (then printing) by the latter. The passages that we, as Christian Observers, are most interested in producing, are the two following. "What the d—l had you to do with that old-fashioned, dangling word, *wherewith?*"—"We must swallow your *hath* too, upon the same authority. I will see you d——d sooner." p. 287. It is with reluctance we even quote these passages: but we justify ourselves partly upon the same principle which justifies the speech which Milton has put into the mouth of Satan, and some which Scripture itself has recorded. Our further justification is, our intention. In these sentences, then, we perceive the connection, natural, although not necessary, between refined and gross profaneness. In fact, they are substantially the same; and, weighing the supposition with philosophical calmness, and equity, we see litttle reason so doubt, that, had Mr. Hume been a London porter or drayman, he would have distinguished himself by the gross and atrocious blasphemies which are familiar to the most abandoned of the lower classes*. We perceive, likewise, in the passages adduced, the degree of respect which the writer paid to the professional character and natural sensibilities of his correspondent; if they do not rather discover the estimate which he formed, justly or unjustly, of those sensibilities.

Nothing more of importance occurs, in our view, till the closing scene of Mr. Hume is related. The well-known account of Dr. A. Smith is, as we expected, and found with great concern, adopted and largely detailed, with unmixed approbation, by Mr. Richie. We had thought, that when the partialities of personal friendship had subsided, a slight degree of sober reflection would

* The substantial identity of these two kinds of impiety is proved by our author's dropping into the latter with so much freedom, and is confirmed by the vulgar impieties which occasionally occur in his works.

have discovered such a death as Mr. Hume's to be unworthy either of a wise man or of a philosopher. The composure, and even hilarity, of his last hours, which are so ostentatiously displayed, confer but little credit upon his fortitude; since, by his own account, he was free from pain, and suffered no abatement of spirits. As little does it justify the presumption of integrity, when it is well known, that a cultivated obduracy will often produce the same state of mind; and felons, who have paid their last debt at the gallows, have, without the advantages of Mr. Hume, exhibited a composure at least as firm, and an indifference at least as sportive. But although we have admitted the representation given by Mr. Hume and his friends of his last sickness, we have never been able completely to lay the rising and importunate doubt, whether the facetious efforts of the dying unbeliever might not resemble the expedient of the school-boy, who, in his passage through the churchyard, "whistles aloud to keep his spirits up." For our own part, and we doubt not that of our readers, enviable as Mr. Richie may esteem such a death as Mr. Hume's, we would rather, were our final safety secure, spend our last hours in tears and terrors, than, with every evidence which the Christian records can afford of the divine displeasure, pass them in a fearless security; and, with a gay indifference, make our transit to eternity, "preparing our souls to answer in scarlet."

Mr. Richie adopts the character which this philosopher has given of himself: but observes, that

"Notwithstanding the eulogium which he sometimes bestows on the equanimity of his own temper, it is known, that he felt the attacks on his literary reputation with exquisite sensibility; and although he persevered in the resolution of writing no answers to his antagonists, except in the single case of his quarrel with Rousseau, he did not always receive the criticisms of others with the apathy he professes. The severe animadversions of Mr. Gray, in his Letters published by Mason, are said to have given him much concern; and his behaviour to Mr. Tytler, the vindicator of Queen Mary, had something like illiberality in it. Such, indeed, was the antipathy which subsisted between him and the last-named gentleman, that they would not sit in company together, and the appearance of the one caused the immediate departure of the other." pp. 301, 302.

In the close of the work before us, Mr. Richie considers, at considerable length, the character of Mr. Hume, 1. As a *metaphysician*: 2. As a *moralist*: 3. As a *writer on general policy*: and, 4. As a *historian*. This, of course, leads him into a critique upon most of the writings of this author. It is strange that, under the first head, Mr. Richie should pay so much attention to the juvenile treatise, which the author had expressly disclaimed, and which, as far as he approved it, was replaced in some of his subsequent works. We believe, however, that he has charged no doctrine upon Mr. Hume, but what is to be found in his later and acknowledged writings. In the observations which we wish to make on the productions of this philosopher, we shall not confine ourselves to the division adopted by his biographer, but take them in the order in which they are usually published; although we shall gladly accept the assistance of Mr. Richie, which is more liberal than we expected to find it.

We can recollect, that before we undertook the perusal of that miscellaneous collection, called the Essays of Mr. Hume, in two octavo volumes, the impression was very strong upon our minds, that in style, in arrangement, and in argument, we should find them remarkably seductive, and, although in the strictest sense sophistical, yet powerfully armed against detection and confutation. In this expectation, however, we were completely disappointed. The style is harsh and affected, the arrangement without order or symmetry, the argument frequently either glaringly absurd or directly contradictory. We ar-

sensible the last-mentioned circumstance was not always intended to be avoided.

The whole of the first volume, comprehending his Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary, are, as being the most remote from matters of prime importance, the most valuable; but they likewise belong less to what is our proper province. They do, indeed, abound throughout in occasional sneers against religion and the clergy; and some entire Essays, such as the x.th and xi.th, entitled, "Of Superstition and Enthusiasm," and "Of the Dignity or Meanness of Human Nature," with the xviii.th, entitled, "The Sceptic," and the xxi.st, "Of National Characters," (where Note [i] is conceived in Mr. Hume's best style of religious virulence), bring forward professedly some of the most objectionable principles of the author. We shall only observe, with respect to the clerical character, that were all as (we are sorry to admit) some are; or had Mr. Hume himself, without any change of principle (which is very possible in every respect), entered into the sacred order, and the whole body were of the same description; his representations would be perfectly accurate. It will not be amiss to add, before we leave this volume, that the unrivalled sagacity of this philosopher led him to "suspect the negroes to be naturally inferior to the whites;" and he endeavours to confirm this opinion*. We do not recollect that Mr. Hume was ever referred to by the advocates of the slave trade, or doubtless the authority of this *truly philosophical* writer, connected with the consideration of his natural benevolence, would have carried all before him.

The second volume has much more to our purpose, not only because the subjects are more important, but because the author has put forth all his strength in exhibiting and defending his view of them. The Inquiry concerning Human Understanding gives the first volume of his repudiated treatise in a new form. Although the reasoning employed in this work is of the abstruse description, the author, at the outset, expresses himself very testily of abstruse speculations—he sees them in company with superstition. The second and fundamental section, "Of the Origin of Ideas," adopts the metaphorical language of metaphysicians, and applies the theory of vision to the operation of the mind; which has led the author, who did not perceive that he was reasoning from metaphor instead of fact, into palpable absurdities. Hence he divides all the perceptions of the mind into *impressions* and *ideas*. The first are the actual sensation, as when we see, feel, hear, love, or hate any object; the second are mere reflections on past sensations. And the only difference which he makes between these two descriptions of perception, is, not of *kind*, as every sober man would conclude, but of *degree*. They "are distinguished by their different *degrees* of force and vivacity." This most unphilosophical statement has been well exposed by Dr. Beattie, who, if we recollect rightly, has inferred, and with apparent justice, that then the idea of fire is a hot idea, that of ice a cold one, and that a man may be burnt or frozen by ideas of what he has formerly suffered, as well as by the actual presence of the objects, only *not in so great a degree*. Men might, perhaps, by an improvement upon this system, arrive at the art of living by ideal eating and drinking, although such food might be less nourishing. Our author likewise asserts, that there can be no ideas of that of which there have been no corresponding impressions*. Yet he himself states the case of the different shades of *colours*, when, if in shewing a distinguishable gradation

* See note, p. 550, ed. 1779.

* See likewise p. 67: "It seems a proposition, which will not admit of much dispute," &c.

of them one is omitted, the spectator has an idea of it, although he may never have seen it. Mr. Hume treats this as a singular instance, without being sensible, that all *graduable* objects (if we may use such a term) come under the same predicament. So that our philosopher seems fated to blunder about *degrees*. The fourth and some following sections discuss a variety of important topics: but, as we are not reviewing Mr. Hume, we cannot afford to give to his reasonings the whole attention which, for many reasons, they deserve. Suffice it to say, that, in inquiring into the evidence upon which we believe matters of fact, he represents that belief as founded upon the supposed connection of cause and effect, and the presumption of continuance in the course of nature, or that the future will be as the past. He denies, that there is any more connection between cause and effect, than a constant conjunction, or that we have any idea whatever of power or necessary connection. And with respect to continuance, he asserts that there is no contradiction in the supposition, that the course of nature may change. He concludes, that custom or habit is the only foundation of our belief in causation; and of belief itself he teaches, conformably to his theory of impressions and ideas, that "belief," as differing from imagination, "is nothing but a conception more intense and steady that what attends the mere fictions of the imagination*:" the usual fallacy of a part for the whole. Now, not to say that the arguments employed by our author, by their very structure, assume what they are adduced to try and finally refute; not to say that he is busying himself to find a reason for instinctive propensities and intuitive truths, independently of divine appointment, and that ignorance of a thing is inferred from ignorance of the mode of its existence or operation; not to say that in the viii.th section, "Of Liberty and Necessity," the existence of the connection between cause and effect is admitted and reasoned upon; and that the inclination of men, which is the very point in dispute, is taken for granted;—the whole of the principles attempted to be established in the preceding sections are still more shamelessly abandoned, and directly opposite ones assumed in their place, in the x.th section, "Of Miracles;" where we have nothing from beginning to end but the unalterable course of nature and invariable experience:—miracles not only have never taken place, but never can. As this subject has met with able discussion from a variety of hands, we shall content ourselves with observing, that the sophistry of this essay is founded on the *assumption* of an unalterable course of nature, on the ambiguity of the term experience, and on false or defective parallels. A simple statement of the evangelic miracles would, perhaps, be the best refutation of it. The next section, "Of a Particular Providence, and of a Future State," is put in the form of a dialogue, doubtless for the purpose of enabling the author to vent his blasphemy with more freedom and less responsibility, and that the pleasure of transgression may be heightened by the ingenious evasion of justice. We cannot proceed in an examination of the argument of this and the following section, which is the last, on his favourite Scepticism. The argument against the divine perfections, particularly the moral, which is the same as Lord Bolingbroke's, is ably confuted by Warburton, in his Letters on that nobleman's philosophy. —But we begin to be tired of our present employment, and shall only say, respecting the "Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals," that general utility is its foundation; that the science of politics, as having a principal respect to temporal good, is the most ample and legitimate field in which this principle obtains; that thence, more

* P. 54. See likewise the page before.

especially by political writers, it has been transferred to every other subject, and, what is worse, as a paramount rule of moral obligation; and that such a principle, as having a temporal reference only, carries with it its own recommendation to every irreligious mind. But we have, on former occasions, delivered our mind on this subject *.

We are aware that Mr. Hume is said by his friends, in his more paradoxical writings, to reason, not to any practical purpose, but to exhibit and expose the weakness of human reason: and we are not disposed to deny that human reason has narrow limits. But we have cause to believe, that, although Mr. Hume himself was not averse to have this convenient retreat at his back, he intended most of his principles to have their direct and practical effect, whenever that was an effect which suited his inclination.

But it is Mr. Hume's History of England which is to be considered as his great work, and without which all his other works would long ago have sunk into the grave which authors most dread. And that is in many respects, doubtless, a work of very superior merit. But it is a large and momentous deduction we are obliged to make, when we say, that there is a systematic falsehood running through every part of it which is connected with religion. The servile bigotry of the most bigoted monk could not pervert unfriendly facts more than Mr. Hume has done those of religion. To give but one instance, the disputation between Lambert and Henry VIII. in chap. xxxii. Lambert is there said to possess "that courage which consists in obstinacy;" and it is added, that his "vanity had probably incited him the more to persevere," &c. These are but a few words, and not very inveterate: but who is there that does not feel an effect, as far as their proper effect is produced, derogatory to the whole character of Lambert, resulting from them? But has Mr. Hume any authority for this sweeping and degrading assertion and insinuation? His authorities at the bottom of the page are, Fox and Goodwin. Fox we have examined, and not the slightest reflection is cast upon the character or motives of the unhappy Lambert; and we are persuaded not in Goodwin neither. Our historian might, if he pleased, judge for himself, what motives would make *him* a martyr; but he had no business to transfer them to another. Or was he ignorant, what effect these little sentences were calculated to produce? We are persuaded, not; we are persuaded, that he designed them to have their full effect: and we have no hesitation to say, that, in this particular, he has been guilty of an artifice, which involves in it the whole turpitude of a direct and wilful falsehood. Where, then, is such a man to be trusted?

In our estimate of Mr. Hume's merits as an author, we have endeavoured to be impartial, and neither, from a general dislike, to deny him those which he fairly claims, nor, from a foolish fear which always magnifies its object, to attribute to him those of which he is destitute. His character, therefore, in this respect, is of a very mixed description. There is such a confusion of truth and falsehood, both of them important, in his writings, that they cannot be read by a real lover of truth without continued and very unpleasant suspicion; and his sensations are not unlike those of the poet, complaining of the deceitful promises of the tender passion, personified:

> Io, che talor menzogna, e talor vero,
> Ho ritrovato le parole sue,
> Non so s'il credo; e vivomi intra due;
> Ne si, ne no, nel cor mi sono intero.

On the whole, we think the publication, with which Mr. Richie has favoured the public, important and

* See particularly our vol. for 1807, pp. 457, &c. Mr. Richie, we are happy to add, is on our side on this question.

valuable, as exhibiting an instance of human corruption in a new form, nourished by circumstances peculiarly favourable and brought nearly to perfection in its kind. The mind of Mr. Hume was naturally speculative, and to such minds the temptations of most potency are generally speculative. To these he fell an easy victim and continued an indefatigable servant. To say that such a person was not the slave of sensuality, is only to say, that this was by far the inferior passion, and that it readily yielded the sway to the master passion. If it be urged, that our philosopher loved his friends and was generally humane, this to a great degree, and to the utmost degree, we will venture to add, in which Mr. Hume attained it, is no more than an animal affection, and, moreover, is a disposition and conduct which mere self-love, in the most degraded sense, would dictate. It is doing good to ourselves; and the consequence generally is, that men will speak well of us for it. But against such qualities, although possessed in no extraordinary degree, there are others to be opposed in the subject now under dissection. We cannot boast of such a decent degree of obtuseness, as not to perceive a moral deformity, of a very repulsive kind, in the predominating vanity of Mr. Hume: a vanity often puerile to the last degree, but to be regarded in a more serious and unfavourable light, when all the reasons are recollected which proclaim, that neither pride nor vanity was made for man. This, however, is the mere diminutive of a sin, when compared with the irreligious principles and efforts which attended and distinguished his whole life, which accompanied his dying hours, and which, by his posthumous provisions, he did all in his power to perpetuate after his death. His enmity to religion, especially Christianity, often took that more malignant form, which expresses itself in insinuation, irony, and sarcasm. In one word, his impiety seems to have been of that prurient and gratuitous description, which gives to us a peculiarly correct idea of that new article in the nomenclature of the passions, the love of guilt. To us, who believe, not only that there is a God of infinite perfections, but that he is to be reverenced and obeyed with all the powers of his reasonable creatures; to us, who believe, not only that Christianity is true, but that it is the divinely appointed and only means of saving the immortal spirits of men from perdition; the character that distinguishes itself by its endeavours to subvert these cardinal articles of belief appears in the highest degree tremendous and pernicious; and we scarcely know whether it be right to palliate, by the smallest shade, its real malignity. If this judgment be charged with illiberality, we know no characters, not even the most deserving victims of public justice, that can be called by their proper name, without a liability to the same charge. And how, after such reflections respecting the character of Mr. Hume, reflections which we can answer for it immediately occur to a Christian mind, Dr. Adam Smith, even with every allowance for the partialities of friendship, could permit himself to write, that he always considered Mr. Hume, "both in his life-time and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit," is to us in a high degree astonishing, and, on no theory of moral sentiments that we can admit, to be reconciled with the character of an intelligent, much less of a moral, and least of all of a religious person.

A History of the early Part of the Reign of James the Second, with an Introductory Chapter. By the Right Hon. Charles James Fox. *To which is added an Appendix.* London. 1808. 4to. Price 1*l.* 16*s.* P. li. 277. and clviii.

For many years before Mr. Fox's

death, it had been generally understood that he was engaged in some composition of an historical nature. Much would naturally be expected from his extraordinary powers, on whatever subject they might be exerted; but the nature, no less than the superiority of his talents, and still more the studies, pursuits, and occupations of his whole life, were such as peculiarly qualified him for the office of an historian. It was the peculiar property of his vigorous intellect, to seize on the strong and important points, whether of argument or character, and to pass by those which were of less real account. His uncommon sagacity was combined with extraordinary precision. These qualities, with an insight into human nature originally deep, and improved by his close observation of men and manners, during a long public life, into a consummate knowledge of the world, eminently qualified him, with the exception of one grand class of considerations and principles which we shall hereafter specify, to trace effects to their more hidden causes, and follow out causes into their less obvious effects; to detect the secret springs of conduct; to mark the less obvious illustrations of character; to develope the principles, to discover the motives, and thus ascertain the moral worth of public men.

But while the qualities of his understanding eminently fitted him to discharge the duties of the historian's office, his temper and dispositions powerfully prompted him to undertake it. His generosity and fervour of spirit, his enthusiastic zeal for liberty, his disdain of vulgar greatness, his contempt for adulation and venality, his noble scorn of those servile arts by which men have too often risen to high rank and great offices; the warmth with which he felt for the weak against the strong, and for the oppressed against the oppressor; his disposition to vindicate the rights of the injured, and mitigate the sorrows of the afflicted;—all these, and other kindred passions, would combine to dispose Mr. Fox to assume with eagerness, and prosecute with ardour, the task of the historian; the very nature of which, he would foresee, must invest him with a sort of judicial authority. It would become his duty, as well as his delight, to redress in some sort the inequalities of fortune, and the unjust awards of fame; to pay the benefactors of mankind their well-earned honours; and pull down from their unmerited elevation the characters, however admired by the million, which really deserve the reprobation of the philosophic mind. These offices besides, always grateful to a man of Mr. Fox's natural dispositions, must be more peculiarly delightful when the history of his own country, during one of its most interesting and eventful periods, would be the subject of his work.

Previously to our entering on the proposed examination of Mr. Fox's History, we have been naturally led into stating the impression produced on our minds on first contemplating him as an historian; and we have been the less disposed to resist the impulse, because by yielding to it we have had an opportunity of delineating some of the chief traits of his intellectual and mental character. Of the defects by which these were alloyed, there is no need to speak at present; and though the politics of the Christian Observer, which professes indeed to belong to no party, were least of all formed in his school, yet we willingly pay that tribute of respect which is due to the memory of a great man, now no more; who certainly possessed, in no small measure, most of those extraordinary powers which command the respectful admiration even of enemies, and at the same time all those amiable tempers which secure the affectionate attachment of friends.

Such being the universal opinion of Mr. Fox's qualifications and attainments, it was natural that the expectations of the public should be powerfully called forth, from the

time of its being known how he meant in future to employ the hours which he could spare from public life. Surely history, if ever, might be expected from such a pen to deserve the dignified description given of it by a great ancient historian, of being Philosophy teaching by examples. Even they who in common take the least concern in political affairs, might naturally look forward with eagerness to the opportunity of accompanying such a guide as Mr. Fox, through the eventful reigns of the three last princes of the house of Stuart.—But while so many considerations tended to raise our expectations of a history from the pen of Mr. Fox, we cannot deny that there were some also of an opposite character, which forced themselves on the mind. Besides one apprehension, of which we shall speak more hereafter, might there not be just reason to fear that Mr. Fox's supposed leaning to democratical notions might taint his work with false political principles, and that his strong party bias might warp his judgment of characters and conduct, especially in the history of the particular period which he had selected? Not only was it so recent, that the parties of the present day may fairly enough be said to be the continuation of those which then existed; but still more, it is a period, the leading characters of which are considered as in some sort the founders of the sects into which our political world is still divided. With all Mr. Fox's love of accuracy, and we give him credit for a large share of this prime excellence in an historian, it was scarcely to be expected that he could completely divest his mind from prejudices in reviewing the conduct of the original leaders of the whigs and tories; that he would weigh in perfectly impartial scales the merits of Hampden and Russell, of Monmouth and Argyle; that he would scrutinize very closely into the faults of men to whom he had long been accustomed to feel, not so much the esteem due to eminent political characters, as the sensations of party attachment, and even of personal affection. But with whatever measure of alloy from this apprehension, it certainly was with high expectations that we took up Mr. Fox's work; and, on the whole, we are not disappointed; for though it appears before the public in an unfinished state, and though we must be compelled to dissent from many of its doctrines and to notice what appear to us material blemishes, yet we can fairly declare that it exhibits the hand of a great master, and is a most valuable addition to our historical stock.

To the work itself is prefixed an explanatory introduction by lord Holland, which exhibits a very pleasing spirit of almost filial reverence and attachment. We learn from it, that "Mr. Fox's notion of engaging in some literary undertaking was adopted during his retirement from public life in the year 1797, when he announced publicly his intention of devoting a greater portion of his time to his private pursuits. He was even on the point of relinquishing his seat in parliament, and retiring altogether from public life; a plan which he had formed many years before, and to the execution of which he always looked forward with the greatest delight."[2] Few of our readers need to be reminded, that it is to what was called *the secession* that lord Holland here alludes. It may provoke a smile in those who remember the profound and ingenious political principles on which that measure was explained and vindicated by some of Mr. Fox's warm admirers*, to find here a confirmation of the suspicions which we must own we have ourselves not seldom entertained, that it arose rather from indolence than subtlety; that it proceeded chiefly from Mr. Fox's wishing to indulge his passion for polite

* See especially Mr. Wyvill's pamphlet published in the succeeding autumn.

literature; and from an impatient longing for the country, towards the month of June, at a time when there appeared little chance of working any favourable change in the opinions of a very decided majority in the house of commons. This case affords a fresh instance of that so common disposition, to refer every part of the conduct of great men to some deep principle of action.

Lord Holland then proceeds to introduce us to Mr. Fox in private life: and on following the retiring statesman from the contentious storms of party strife, to the more tranquil enjoyments of his Tusculan villa, it is not a little gratifying to find, that even when he might be supposed to be withdrawing from public life with some degree of vexation and disgust, his mind was not soured by disappointment, nor harassed by the workings of those corroding passions, which mortified ambition too often calls forth, and keeps alive.

"During his retirement," says lord Holland, "that love of literature, and fondness for poetry, which neither pleasure nor business had ever extinguished, revived with an ardour, such as few in the eagerness of youth, or in pursuit of fame or advantage, are capable of feeling." .... "Intercourse with the world had so little deadened in him the sense of the simplest enjoyments, that even in the hours of apparent leisure, and inactivity, he retained that keen relish of existence, which, after the first impressions of life, is so rarely excited but by great interests, and strong passions. Hence it was, that in the interval between his active attendance in parliament, and the undertaking of his history, he never felt the tedium of a vacant day. A verse in Cowper, which he frequently repeated,

> 'How various his employments, whom the world calls idle!'

was an accurate description of the life he was then leading; and I am persuaded, that if he had consulted his own gratification only, it would have continued to be so." p. iii.

We in part agree with lord Holland, in ascribing the pleasure with which Mr. Fox enjoyed a life of literary retirement, to his happy disposition of mind; yet we cannot also but take the opportunity of pointing out to our young men of family and fortune, what a resource a taste for literature affords against low sensuality, as well as against the bad effects which the disappointments of public life, and sometimes the ingratitude experienced in private, are apt to produce on the mind. This taste, however, must be formed in early life, if formed at all, by devoting to study those hours which it may require some resolution to redeem from hounds and horses. Mr. Fox, it is well known, was an excellent scholar. He resembled his political rival, Mr. Pitt, in the keen relish with which he tasted the beauties of the great writers of antiquity; and of both of them, probably, it may truly be affirmed, that the pleasures they derived from a highly cultivated taste, were far greater, as well as more pure and tranquil, than they ever enjoyed from gratified ambition.

"When Mr. Fox had determined to employ some part of his leisure in writing, he was actuated by a variety of considerations in the choice of the task he should undertake. An historical work seemed more of a piece with the tenour of his former life, and might prove of greater benefit to the public, and to posterity. These motives, together with his intimate knowledge of the English constitution, naturally led him to prefer the history of his own country, and to select a period favourable to the illustration of the great general principles of freedom, on which it is founded." p. v.

"With these views," says lord Holland, "it was impossible that he should not fix on the Revolution of 1688." He was more particularly bent on correcting the erroneous views which he conceived to have been given of that event, and of the two reigns which preceded it, by several of our most popular historians; and on vindicating some of the most distinguished characters of those times, from the aspersions which had been, as he believed, unjustly cast upon them, by Dalrym-

ple and Macpherson. With these views he was naturally led to scrutinize the authority on which these latter authors had grounded their attacks on some of the leading members of the popular party of the age of Charles II. and James II. He early applied to lord Lauderdale, from whom, as well as from Mr. Laing, he derived much information and assistance in the prosecution of his work. His scrupulous accuracy with respect to facts, concurred with his suspicions of the unfairness of Dalrymple and Macpherson, in making him wish to examine the manuscripts which were preserved in the Scotch college at Paris, and the state papers in the depôt of foreign affairs. Of the former description, Mr. Fox at length ascertained, that as many as four folio and six quarto volumes, containing memoirs in James the Second's own hand writing, from the time he was sixteen years of age, together with two quarto manuscript volumes of letters between Charles II. and his brother the duke of York, and two more, also manuscript volumes, of letters to the duke from Charles the Second's ministers, had all been placed in the college soon after the death of James II., and had remained there at the time of the French revolution. Of these valuable manuscripts lord Gower, the British ambassador, before he left Paris in 1792, with a truly commendable precaution, for which the result proved there was but too just cause, offered to take charge. They were not, however, committed to him, from what cause is unknown; and they soon after fell a victim to the general insecurity and terror which a state of anarchy but too naturally produces. It appears that there was in the Scotch college, besides the papers in James the Second's own hand-writing, an historical narrative, compiled from the former: and Mr. Fox, in a letter to Mr. Laing, declares that it was from this narrative that Macpherson's extracts were made: and he adds, that he learns, from undoubted authority, that Macpherson never saw the original journal; which, however, he truly states, from reading his preface, one would have supposed not only that he had inspected accurately, but that all his extracts were taken from it. He goes on to censure Mr. Macpherson, with the warmth natural to a generous mind on detecting such a scandalous imposition.

But the state papers preserved in the foreign office at Paris offered likewise a most tempting field to the curiosity of Mr. Fox; and he was the more desirous of examining them, from observing,

"That sir J. Dalrymple frequently quotes, or rather refers to them, without printing the letter, or extracting the passage from which his statement is taken and his inferences drawn." "He immediately, therefore, availed himself of the opportunity afforded by the restoration of peace to repair to Paris, where the liberality of the French government opened to him the archives of the foreign affairs without reserve." He diligently used his privilege, and, "assisted by three friends, spent a great part of every morning, while he remained at Paris, at the Depôt des Affaires Etrangeres, in examining and transcribing the original papers, and brought back with him, from Paris, a great number of the letters both of Barillon and D'Avaux." p. xxxiii.

Of the use his studies at Paris had been to him, and more particularly of the value of the letters of Barillon, he spoke in the strongest terms. "They were worth their weight in gold." And it is probable he had discovered some curious circumstances from the letters of D'Avaux, which also he had transcribed. So diligent was he in searching out and preparing the materials for executing his projected work.

"But even after Mr. Fox had commenced his historical labours, he was often seduced into paths more congenial and alluring. He was often drawn from his historical researches into critical inquiries, into the study of the classics; to works of imagination and poetry. His letters are filled with complaints

of such of his interruptions as arose from politics, while he speaks with delight of whole days devoted to Euripides and Virgil." p. xi. Again, we are told, that "when pressed to sacrifice his Greek studies for a time," he answered, "I have no thoughts of throwing away my Greek books, and would give up the whole plan, if I thought it incompatible with my giving a little time to them." p. xiii. His noble editor proceeds: "But it was not merely the interference of other occupations, whether of business or amusement, that impeded the progress of his work." "He knew by experience that he was as slow in composition as he was rapid in public speaking." p. xiv. It was not only that Mr. Fox was scrupulously attentive to what are commonly esteemed the niceties of language; but he had some singular opinions concerning style, which greatly added to his labour. We cannot state them so well as in the noble editor's own words.

"On the rules of writing he had reflected much, and deeply. His own habits naturally led him to compare them with those of public speaking; and the different, and even opposite, principles upon which excellence is to be attained in these two great arts, were no unusual topics of his conversation. The difference did not, in his judgment, consist so much in language or diction, as in the arrangement of thoughts, the length and construction of sentences, and, if I may borrow a phrase familiar to public speakers, in the mode of putting an argument. A writer, to preserve his perspicuity, must keep distinct and separate, those parts of a discourse, which the orator is enabled, by modulation of voice, and with the aid of action, to bring at once into view, without confounding or perplexing his audience. Frequency of allusion, which in speaking produces the happiest effect, in writing renders the sense obscure, and interrupts the simplicity of the discourse. Even those sudden turns, those unforeseen flashes of wit, which, struck out at the moment, dazzle and delight a public assembly, appear cold and inanimate, when deliberately introduced into a written composition."

Again—"A perusal of the Letter to the Electors of Westminster, will shew how scrupulously Mr. Fox attended to these distinctions. That work was written in the heat of a session of parliament. It treated professedly of subjects upon which the writer was daily in the habit of speaking, with his usual force of argument and variety of illustration. Notwithstanding these circumstances, no political tract of any note in our language, is, in form or style, less oratorical, or, with the exception of one passage, more free from those peculiarities, which the practice of public speaking seems calculated to produce. Such a strict observance of these principles must have cost him great trouble and attention. He was so apprehensive that his writings might retain some traces of that art, in the exercise of which he had employed the greater part of his life, that he frequently rejected passages, which in any other author would not have appeared liable to such an objection. He seems even to have distrusted his own judgment upon this subject; and after having taken the greatest pains, he was never sufficiently satisfied with his own success." Accordingly, "He had employed many days in writing his Letter to the Electors of Westminster, in 1793, and even the publication of his speech on the late duke of Bedford (the only instance in which he ever revised what he had delivered in public) occupied a greater portion of his time than could be easily imagined, by those who were unacquainted with his scrupulous attention to all the niceties of language." p. xxxviii.

Mr. Fox's authority is deservedly so great on all questions of a literary nature, that we conceive we owe it to our readers to give them a complete view of his opinions on language.

"Simplicity, both in expression and construction, was the quality in style which he most admired, and the beauty he chiefly endeavoured to attain. He was the most scrupulously anxious to preserve this character in his writings, because he thought that the example of some great writers had, in his own time, perverted the taste of the public, and that their imitators had corrupted the purity of the English language. Though he frequently commended both Hume's and Blackstone's style, and always spoke of Middleton's with admiration, he once assured me, that he would admit no word into his book, for which he had not the authority of Dryden." "He was scarcely less nice about phrases and expressions. It is indeed possi-

ble, that those of his readers, who have formed their taste upon Johnson or Gibbon, or taken their notions of style from the criticism of late years, may discover, in the course of the work, some idioms which are now seldom admitted into the higher classes of composition. To speak without reserve upon a subject in which his judgment, as an author, may be called in question, it appears to me more likely, that such phrases should have been introduced upon system, than that they should have escaped his observation, and crept in through inadvertence. The work is indeed "*incomplete and unfinished;*" but it is not with reference to any phrases, which may be supposed to be too familiar, or colloquial, that such a description has been given of it. Such was the author's abhorrence of any thing that savoured of pedantry or affectation, that if he was ever reduced to the alternative of an inflated or homely expression, I have no doubt but he preferred the latter." ..... "From this persuasion, as well as from many other considerations," lord Holland goes on to state, "he has religiously preserved every phrase and word of the original manuscript. That there are several passages, especially in the latter end of the text, which he might, that there are some which he obviously would, have corrected, is unquestionable; but with the knowledge of such scrupulous attention to language in an author, to have substituted any word or expression, for that which he had written, would not have been presumption only, but injustice."

It was formerly proposed by Dr. Swift to Lord Oxford, that a society should be formed under the royal patronage, for the purpose of improving and fixing the standard of our native tongue; and the want of some such institution in this country has since been often the subject both of surprise and regret to many of our most eminent writers. It has been well remarked, that our excellent translation of the Holy Scriptures has in some measure answered this purpose; but such an institution would have insured to our language greater uniformity and permanency, and have prevented that so natural disposition to imitate the style of every writer who at any time happens to be popular. This is not the place for entering into any lengthened disquisition concerning style. For our part, we avow, that, with all our respect for the manly sense of Johnson, and the nervous and classical composition of Hume, we ourselves concur with Mr. Fox, in greatly preferring the style of the writers of an earlier period; that of Dryden, of Middleton, and we must add, of South. Every language has a manner of its own. The great men whose names we have just mentioned, wrote *English*; from the peculiar manner and character of which language our later authors have departed, framing their style more after the manner, and adopting many of the idioms, of the Latin tongue. There is no saying to what length they might have carried this fashion, had not the example of Gibbon, at once laboured, obscure, and inharmonious, held out to all future historians an abundant, and, as at least we trust, a sufficient warning against forming themselves any more after this Roman model.

As we have been naturally drawn into these observations concerning style, it may not be improper to say here a few words on that of Mr. Fox himself; though they perhaps might more properly be introduced when we take a general review of the merits of his performance. His style, as might be expected, bears evidently the stamp and character of the man. It is simple and vigorous; yet by no means so correct as might have been expected, considering the care with which lord Holland tells us it was revised. We cannot but think also, and the noble editor himself seems half inclined to the same opinion, that Mr. Fox's passion for simplicity has sometimes carried him too far into the use of words and idioms, which, without over-refining, may be deemed too homely for so dignified a class of composition as history. His sentences also are sometimes too long; and the collocation of the different members of them such as might have been greatly amended by the careful perusal of Blair, or the imitation of

Robertson or Beattie. On the whole, however, it is a style well suited to the expression of the manly, and sometimes profound, sentiments it lays before us; and, if not ambitious of admiration, it is justly entitled to respect.

But it was not only concerning style that Mr. Fox entertained some singular opinions: his notions of historical composition were also somewhat peculiar.

"He had formed his plan so exclusively on the model of ancient writers, that he not only felt some repugnance to the modern practice of notes, but he thought that all which an historian wished to say should be introduced as part of a continued narration, and never assume the appearance of a digression, much less of a dissertation annexed to it. From the period, therefore, that he closed his introductory chapter, he defined his duty as an author, to consist in recounting the facts as they arose, or, in his simple and forcible language, *in telling the story of those times.* A conversation which passed on the subject of the literature of the age of James the Second, proves his rigid adherence to these ideas; and perhaps the substance of it may serve to illustrate and explain them. In speaking of the writers of that period, he lamented that he had not devised a method of interweaving any account of them or their works, much less any criticism on their style, into his history. On my suggesting the example of Hume and Voltaire, who had discussed such topics at some length, either at the end of each reign, or in a separate chapter, he observed, with much commendation of their execution of it, that such a contrivance might be a good mode of writing critical essays, but that it was, in his opinion, incompatible with the nature of his undertaking, which, if it ceased to be a narrative, ceased to be a history." p. xxxvi.

Well might his noble editor add; "Such restraints undoubtedly operated as taxes upon his ingenuity, and added to that labour which the observance of his general laws of composition rendered sufficiently great."

With all our respect for the great historians of antiquity, whose right to be regarded as just standards of historical composition we by no means intend to question; with even still greater deference for the authority of Mr. Fox himself; may we not be permitted to express our dissent from this opinion? May we not ask, if the works of these ancient authors themselves would not have been more valuable, if they had contained more ample and particular information concerning the civil government, the finances, the commerce, manufactures, morals and manners, learning and arts, of their repective times and countries? Are not these, in truth, among the most interesting and most valuable parts of history? May we not even ask, if they are not in some measure necessary for enabling us to read with intelligence the history of the events of any particular period, and the actions of any distinguished individual?

Virtue and vice, it may be said, depend not on circumstances any more than on time and place. But even in them, if the essential nature cannot be altered, there may be an endless variety of degrees. How can we judge fairly of the characters and merits of men, of the wisdom or folly of actions, unless we have just notions of the circumstances in which they were placed, of the encouragements which invited, of the difficulties which deterred them; of the tools they had to work with, of the aid they might expect; of the opposition against which they had to struggle, of the obstacles they had to overcome? How are all these to be ascertained, but by an accurate knowledge of all particulars, so that we may live as it were in the times, and among the persons, of whom we read; see with their eyes, and reason and decide on their premises? Now we admit that it may be possible to interweave many of these particulars into a narrative, and to introduce them interspersed throughout the series of facts which is to be related. But, besides that this may often be utterly impracticable, especially where a knowledge of many particulars is needed for giving us a complete idea of the situation of men

and things; to what shifts must a writer be reduced, what artifices must he not be obliged to employ, for the purpose of interlacing these particulars? And after all his labour, his object, commonly, will not only be most imperfectly attained, but the information which he does supply, being given occasionally, as opportunities occur, and when the mind is intent on the story which is reciting, will not lay hold on the reader's mind with the same force, and enable him to consider it at large in all its bearings and relations, as if it had been brought before his view when he had no other subject of contemplation. Finally; may we not ask, if the historian, duly sensible of the value of the information in question, has, to use lord Holland's own phrase, "taxed his ingenuity" to the utmost to devise the means of bringing it before the reader's view, will not his efforts, and the object of them, become painfully visible to every intelligent eye? Will not the work be apt to contract somewhat of the air of a novel, rather than a history? Will it not resemble the Anacharsis of Barthelemy, more than any narrative of real transactions? When we consider how entirely the manly simplicity of any history would be destroyed by such an artificial contexture as it would become the historian's province to fabricate, it is really astonishing that such a strange opinion concerning historical composition should be entertained by any writer of sense, and more especially by such a man as Mr. Fox. And this notion will appear in him still more extraordinary, when we consider the judicious remark with which he opens his introductory chapter, and that he justly states it to be one of the most important uses to be made of history, to speculate on the probable results of the measures which are related, and on the course of conduct which, in the times and circumstances of which we are reading, it would have been prudent or justifiable to pursue. It is thus that we learn those lessons of practical wisdom which such a careful and deliberate study of past events is calculated to impress on our minds; and qualify ourselves, in any similar circumstances, to take our line with promptitude and confidence, without that hesitation and distraction which often, in men of the best understandings and most fully stored minds, produce doubtful and indecisive counsels, when there is a present necessity for action, and when a multitude of objects and plans at once present themselves to the view. It is by no means improbable, that some of those very particulars which Mr. Fox's principle would exclude, would be necessary to our forming a just and enlightened judgment of the conduct proper to be pursued by the men, on whose actions we should have to speculate; and of the events, the consequences of which we should have to estimate.—We have discussed this subject the more fully, from the unaffected respect we feel for Mr. Fox's authority on the one hand, and from the importance of the question on the other. On the whole, we trust our readers will in general agree with us in thinking, that Mr. Fox's love of the masculine simplicity of the ancients biassed in this case his better judgment. In truth, in any one less natural (for whether we speak of the author or of the man, simplicity was one of the great charms of his character), this exact conformity to the model of the ancients might appear to savour of pedantry or affectation. But may we not also ask, whether an historian, who would bind himself down by such strict rules as those which our author prescribed to himself, would not be often compelled, in order to elude the force of his own principles, to resort to such ingenious devices at would very materially injure that very simplicity which Mr. Fox was so anxious to maintain? Indeed, this persuasion is abundantly confirmed by the passage we have already quoted, where-

in he is represented as lamenting that he had not devised a method of interweaving into his history any account of the authors of the age of James the Second, or of their works, much less any criticism on their style; and again, where lord Holland speaks of these restraints operating as "taxes on his ingenuity."

Another particular, in which Mr. Fox's deference for the ancients appears to have been excessive, is in his extreme repugnance to notes. We readily admit, that even in many prose compositions, but still more in verse, the use of them has been carried much too far. We grant that notes are often no more than the refuge of idleness or incapacity, a clumsy device for introducing matter which the author, by a little consideration and ingenuity, might have easily devised the means of interweaving into the body of his work, instead of pinning it to the outside of it; but still, in this, as in other cases, the abuse of notes should not discredit the sober and moderate use of them. It is remarkable, by the way, that there is one note, in the third chapter of the History (p. 17), which, we must presume, Mr. Fox, had he lived to put the last hand to this part of his History, would have expunged, since the contents of it might easily be incorporated into the text, and are even a necessary part of it.

But if we find ourselves compelled to declare, that, notwithstanding our high respect for Mr. Fox's literary authority, we cannot accord with him in the above particulars; there was a scrupulous attention of another sort, which, though it materially added to his labour, and greatly retarded his progress, was well deserving of all his care. This is, his "scrupulous exactness with respect to all the circumstances of any fact which he was obliged either to relate or advert to." p. xxiii. "He took," says lord Holland, "indefatigable pains to investigate the authority for every assertion in the writers he consulted, and to correct the slightest variation in their accounts, though apparently of little importance. Before he drew any inference whatever, the weight of evidence was so carefully balanced in his mind, that the authority for each particular circumstance was separately examined, and distinctly ascertained."

It is impossible to commend this scrupulous accuracy in too high terms. It is, in truth, the quality which constitutes the whole difference between a narrative of real facts, and the mere fables of the imagination. It is this alone which renders history a useful, or even a safe instructor. It is this which gives its value to every other excellence: and we then may indeed listen to the reasonings and inferences of a man of Mr. Fox's superior intellectual powers, when we know that the laborious care with which he has selected his premises is not less than the extraordinary sagacity with which he has deduced his conclusions. This scrupulous exactness respecting facts was likewise the more valuable in Mr. Fox's instance, because it tended to counteract the effects of that partiality from which it was, perhaps, scarcely possible for him completely to divest his mind.

But it were a mere waste of words to expatiate any farther on the benefits which must result from this scrupulous accuracy. They are not less obvious than they are great; and they are not only in the highest degree honourable to Mr. Fox's credit as an historian, but to his character as a man.

We have been the more particular in our account of Lord Holland's introduction, on account of the information which it conveys to us of Mr. Fox's opinions, and of the illustrations which it affords us of his character. And, indeed, as the History is unfinished, it may be itself regarded as useful, chiefly from the specimen which it gives us

of the author's ideas of the nature, principles, and execution of an historical work.

(To be continued.)

Popular Objections to the Established Church, in a Letter to our Neighbours. London: Burditt. 1808. Pp. 12. Price 2d.

We presume, from evidence supplied by this popular essay itself, that the writer (without excluding the idea of foreign assistance) is a dissenting minister at Olney in Buckinghamshire, who is anxious to guard his neighbours (a term comprehending equally those of the established church and his own congregation) from some violent and formidable attack upon the interests of *dissent*. From the very object, therefore, of his address, we perceive that the author does by no means confine his charitable views to his own party: indeed, his benevolence at the close becomes more explicitly expansive; and, in addition to the common appellation of neighbours, the more endearing and persuasive ones of "friends and fellow-christians," immediately follow, and will be appropriated to themselves, no doubt, by every inhabitant of the long broad street of the town of Olney. But not to lose sight of the *previous attack*, into the nature of which the closing paragraph affords a more satisfactory insight than all the rest of the letter; we read, in the following terms of pathetic remonstrance, "You are sensible that in this business we are not the aggressors; but that the above is written merely in consequence of an unprovoked attack, on which account, we feel ourselves called upon to stand upon the *defensive*." Ignorant, as we are, of every circumstance relative to the attack and defence here brought to our notice, all our information respecting either must be drawn from the party which sustains, or assumes, the honourable distinction of being the defendant. From the present publication, therefore, particularly the beginning and end of it (for the extremes in this, as in some other cases, happily unite), we should infer, respecting the attack, or succession of attacks, that it must have been of the most provoking description; that every defect, real, occasional, personal, or imaginary, in the dissenting system, was exposed and exaggerated with a merciless severity; that not only unworthy conduct, but unworthy motives, were ascribed to the leaders of dissenting communities; that their institute was represented as affording no security against a perfect revolution of sentiment and doctrine at any future time, however sudden; that the ministers of dissent were described as actuated by an indiscriminate and violent hostility against the established church, which they esteem and revile as no better than a limb of Antichrist; that they were held up to the public as persons who consider it not enough for a man to be a Christian, unless he be likewise a dissenter; and that a few proselytes are, in their view, obtained at a cheap rate, although the character of a pious clergyman of the established church be vilified, his influence annihilated, and his church deserted*. All this, and much more, expressed in a style much more opprobrious, must be supposed in the attack which can justify the epithet of defensive in the present reply. There is one circumstance in particular which this principle absolutely requires to have accompanied the original attack, and that is, that it was made through the medium of the *press*, written in the most popular and persuasive manner, and addressed, not only to the whole

* It would not, in our opinion, be an inquiry undeserving of the serious attention of dissenters of piety and candour, what is the duty of a minister of that persuasion, in a parish where a pious, laborious, and successful clergyman of the church of England is situated.

population of Olney, but to that of the whole country. It is essential to a proper defence, that it should be commensurate only with the attack; and therefore we may, from the defence, judge pretty accurately concerning the nature and extent of the aggression. The one is *litera scripta*, of which the character and influence are well known; the other must be so likewise. This written document, however, this first blow in the polemics of Olney, has not come to our knowledge. Till, therefore, we are apprised of its existence, we must satisfy ourselves with such conjectures as we have stated; acknowledging, however, the commendable spirit of forbearance which has prevented our anonymous dissenter from expressing himself more distinctly on this important point *.

The title of the present work reminds us of two short essays, conveyed to us by a correspondent early in the career of the Christian Observer, entitled, "On some popular Objections against the Church of England," which are found respectively in our vol. for 1803, pp. 209, &c., and 341, &c. They anticipate some of the observations which we might otherwise be expected to make in this place.

It is remarkable, that this popular duodecimo of twelve pages, in which the writer, or the body corporate designated by the plural pronoun, profess, as they feel themselves called upon, to stand on the defensive, is formally, from beginning to end, and with the exertion of the sum total of the author's might, offensive. The heads of the heavy charge against the church of which we profess ourselves members are contained in these words: "We object to the Church of England, as by law established, because we conceive it to be,—Unwarrantable in its Authority,—Oppressive and degrading to its Ministers,—Injurious to the People,—Trifling in its Ceremonies,—and Incongruous in its Offices."

When the protestant churches renounced the usurpation and corruptions of the see of Rome, they thought it due to themselves and to the world to exhibit, in an open and firm manner, not only the grounds upon which they asserted their liberty, but likewise, and principally, the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies which they adopted in the place of what they had discarded. This, indeed, was a delicate and arduous undertaking. They had, in the first place, to agree among themselves: a circumstance by no means the easiest to effect, even should we suppose the best disposition to harmony, when the minds of men were just set free from the yoke of papal tyranny and impiety, and were hardly yet formed to positive sentiments on the points which occasioned the rupture; and when, as in all revolutions where great energies are called into exercise, there is much irritability, suspicion, instability, at first. But the point of greatest hazard was, that by this means they furnished an object against which the power, malice, and ingenuity of their adversaries might direct their resources: they gave them something to attack; they presented a front to the enemy. To whatever danger, however, this procedure exposed them, they considered it honest, and what might justly be expected from them, and were not afraid of the consequences. They might, indeed, have declined this inconvenience, by exhibiting no confessions, no set of doctrines, no visible forms of worship, which they would acknowledge as their own, and by which they would abide. They might have retained the liberty of altering their creed on any emergency, of being able to deny any doctrine with which they were pressed, and of exercising the same versatility in the forms which must exist in all external worship. Their enemies would find nothing to at-

* A correspondent, under the signature of An Impartial Observer, instructs us to view the matter in this light. He is probably well informed on the subject.

tack but a shadow; and of course it would have been impossible for them to gain a victory.

The church of England has afforded an example of the fairness and openness here commended in the protestant churches in general; and with many advantages attending this conduct, has exposed herself to the peculiar disadvantage which has been specified: she has furnished her enemies with a definite and broad object of attack, which they have never failed to assail with all their might. Now, although we do not consider the present assailant as the most formidable of the host, and should not feel disposed to introduce him into our pages but for the popularity which he has affected in the price, size, and style of his pamphlet, we are happy to observe, that what *we* consider as the most important part of the constitution of the church, her doctrine, at least as far as it is exhibited in the Articles, its most authentic document, is suffered to pass without either censure or sneer. This circumstance, which itself is of great weight, acquires additional importance from the disposition discovered by the writer towards the established church in general. Here then the doctrine of our church, that doctrine which professes to teach the scriptural way of salvation, which is subscribed by all her ministers, and which at least they are more likely to teach than if no such obligation had been entered into, is negatively allowed the whole of its most important claim. We do not undervalue the rest; but the virtual concession here made we deem of the highest moment, and desire that it may be carefully remembered by the reader.

With respect to the government, ritual, and ceremonies of the establishment, the main or single object of attack in the present pamphlet; we consider it not, in the smallest degree, inconsistent with our avowed and cordial attachment to that establishment, to acknowledge that we do not hold ourselves bound to assert the absolute perfection of any of the parts which compose it. Our decided preference of an episcopal regimen, as of apostolic origin, will suffer us to admit, that were our dioceses, as was once intended, multiplied, and by that means individually contracted, the change would, in our opinion, not be for the worse. We have never contended, nor think ourselves obliged to contend, that our liturgy, articles, or homilies had no words originally inserted in them, which could not possibly in after ages, in centuries, change their meaning, or become obsolete. It is possible they might have been amended at the time, and that in more important articles. We admit, that a liturgy formed in the reign of Edward VI., improved in that of Elizabeth, still farther improved in that of Charles II., would likewise have borne improvement, when the measure was attempted, in the reign of William III. Although we might not be disposed to trust altogether to such improvements as would have been made by Tillotson and Burnet, prelates of great eminence in many respects; yet upon the whole, and from the specimens of the intended alterations, we much regret that real bigotry and intolerance rendered the project abortive. We have so much liberality, latitudinarianism, or whatever people may please to call it, in us, as to wish that every allowable accommodation had been made to the dissenters, and that those who would not be satisfied might at least be left without excuse. With respect to ceremonies, we are not peculiarly either anxious or rigid. But after having made these concessions, such as our opponents would perhaps have to make on their own account, were there any thing fixed and ostensible in their institution, we form such an estimate of the general perfection attainable in human affairs, as to reflect with pleasure and gratitude, that so great a portion of what is excellent, with so moderate an alloy

of imperfection, is secured to us and to all our countrymen who are willing to avail themselves of it, in the constitution of our church and the form of her worship. And we have not the least doubt, that any impartial person, imbued with just feelings of piety, were he to be present in a congregation of the establishment, uniting in her service in the manner prescribed and with the spirit evidently intended by her, taking that active part in the performance of the service which is most considerately provided for all engaged in it, and displaying, by every thing which can indicate a state of mind, that attention, seriousness, earnestness, and correspondence of affection with the varying kinds of devotion, which ought to be considered as exercised, for the purpose of ascertaining the merits of the worship:—in such an assembly of worshippers we doubt not that the person described would, for the time, abandon his prejudices, and feel an impulse almost as irresistible as reasonable, to fall down and worship God in the company of those whom he would be convinced were then worshipping in spirit and in truth. Is there no respect, no gratitude, no allowance, due to a government, which, instead of persecuting our religion, or imposing a corrupt one, publicly professes and supports that which we believe to be the true and the only true one? We are aware that there are many dangers to a church peculiar to a state of temporal prosperity: but would we restore the times of persecution?

We have been led farther than we intended in these observations: but they do not appear to us to be irrelevant. We will now come to the matter in hand. We might be excused from a very minute examination of the several articles of which the indictment before us consists, could we be satisfied that its readers, and much more its author, would take the trouble to read what, by anticipation, has been written in answer to them. Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity, the fifth book in particular, would teach them, that we have not quite so little to say in our defence as the anonymous censor of Olney supposes or would inculcate. But it is with real concern we express our conviction, that such works are not read by those who are most concerned to read them; and we refer it to their consciences to determine, whether they *desire* to find the religion and worship of the great body of the nation justifiable.

The first article against the church of England is, that "it is *unwarrantable* in its authority." Our author immediately enters upon the reason: "Because we find no such church, or its ceremonies, or offices, mentioned in the Scriptures, which we, and all *protestants*, who profess the name of Christ, declare to be the only rule of our *faith* and *practice*." By this observation one would expect to find in Scripture an exact delineation of every circumstance relative to the government, ministers, service, ceremonies, places of worship, forms of building, with an endless &c, in every society of Christians, in every successive age, and in every country: from which the smallest departure should be absolutely unlawful. But will the dissenters, or any denomination of them, or any denomination for a single act of their worship, shew us the precise scriptural authority for every circumstance which attends their service? Is the peculiar mode and order and substance of their praying, singing, preaching, set down in so many words in the Old or New Testament?

The church of England "is *oppressive* and *degrading* to its ministers." The reason: because she requires in them a voluntary and limited obedience to men; and a man is something *human*. See, for a comparative illustration of this point, Jay's Life of Winter.

She "is *injurious* to the people:" because the corruption of this very

people puts it out of her power to supply her churches with fit and able ministers.

The establishment "is *trifling* in its ceremonies." The more pity, then, that a wise and good man should quarrel about a trifle. The argument of the writer on this head seems almost to require that no posture should be used, no apparel worn, in the worship of God. At least we fear that nothing, under either head, which our church should adopt, would satisfy *him* or "solemnise" *his* mind.

"It is *incongruous* in its offices." In that of ordination: because the candidate is "obliged to declare in the most solemn manner, to the bishop, that he is 'moved by the *Holy Ghost*.'" Is he obliged to apply for ordination? And do the dissenters, at their ordinations, require no declarations to the same purpose? Ought they not so to do? Where the declaration is insincere, there is great guilt: and we hope, that *as* there is less temptation to it among the dissenters, it is likewise less frequent among them. But this objection is sufficient to discover the *quo animo*, the real disposition, of the author. The next observation, respecting the office of baptism, is perhaps a still more flagrant instance. No parent, he says, is permitted to answer as godfather to his own child; nor any before they have received the holy communion. Again, where the subject is resumed, and still more strongly: "the *parents*, the most proper guardians of the child, are excluded, and strangers appointed to take the charge of its *immortal interests!* and those strangers," &c. &c. Now, whether we consider this appointment as a general security against the possible neglect of the parents, or as a particular one adapted to the danger of popery in the beginning of the reformation, can it be any reasonable objection against the church of England, that she is peculiarly solicitous respecting the Christian education of her members? Our author seems to triumph in the promise of the sponsors, which we have sometimes heard, by way of opprobrium, called *a false oath*. It is no oath at all; and if it were, it is not necessarily a false one; to call it so, is *a false affirmation*. The word *regenerate* ought, in all fairness, to be explained by the general tenor and some very express assertions of the service. And we would ask any candid dissenter, who considers the strong, express, and universal command respecting baptism to be binding, whether he regards the administration of it as attended with any effect; and what that effect is.

That great practical abuses exist with respect to confirmation, we acknowledge and regret: but if the liturgy were obeyed, and it is answerable for no consequences arising from disobedience, all would be consistent and well. We shall make a general remark, applicable to this as well as the following offices, by and by.

On the office of visiting the sick our pamphleteer is very warm and positive. It is unnecessary to enter into a formal vindication of this service, which, on the supposition of the right performance of it, we think capable of sufficient vindication. We will only observe, that our author, who affects a pretty familiar acquaintance with the canons of the church when they answer his purpose, has forgotten to inform his Olney friends, that the 67th canon permits a minister, "if he be a preacher," to instruct the sick "as he shall think most needful and convenient."

Our author assumes a great deal when he comes to the office of burial. The matter has been discussed in our pages by some of our correspondents, to whom our indexes will enable the reader, as yet unsatisfied on the subject, to refer. The phrase of God's taking the soul of a person to himself, seems to be grounded on the text in Eccles. xii. 7;

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and *the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.*" At least the whole philippic of the Olney orator is equally applicable to this scripture. With equal sagacity he confounds a person's being delivered out of the miseries of this sinful world, with his "being translated into the full enjoyment of everlasting bliss." The first is a plain case, and our liturgy decides upon it: the second is not, and it does not decide.

But we have a general observation to make, as we announced. The whole language of our liturgy is favourable to the character of the members of the church, and seems to consider them all as Christians of some growth. In the present state of the church, many disadvantages arise from this circumstance. It is too just an observation, as applicable to ecclesiastical government, that

> Whate'er is best administered is best.

A very imperfect system of church government well executed, is preferable to a faultless one ill executed. Now did the church of England possess, which hardly any national church, or any church on a large scale, and for a long time together, has possessed, that power of discipline over her retained members, and of excommunication or exclusion of those whom she desires not to retain, upon which she evidently presumes, and which is essential to her purity; then there is scarcely an office, or part of an office, prescribed by her, which would not have an obvious propriety and use; which is not such as ought to accompany a true member, not only of the visible, but of the invisible church of Christ, throughout life, and take leave of him dying and at death *. How far a national church may be justified, on the score of prudence or sincerity, in a pretermission, or a reserve not at first discernible, respecting those who are not *properly*, even with respect to outward conduct, but are *actually* her members, is another question and worthy of discussion. That part of the service, however, which seems appropriated to the consideration of the case of unworthy members, whether apparently so, or really with a contrary appearance, is the preaching of the word, in which reproof and rebuke are as necessary as exhortation and encouragement. And here we cannot refrain from observing, that, amidst the acknowledged and great evils arising from the mixture of characters, chiefly, but not exclusively, to be found in the religious assemblies of the establishment, there is something of a compensation in the circumstance that it brings within the squad of evangelical truth those who most need its admonitions and offers, and who would otherwise be, not indeed least likely, for some never enter a church, but little likely, to have any knowledge of either. The careless, the formal, the sensual, even the profane, attend the service of the establishment; and how many *additional* subjects of the Messiah's kingdom are created out of the number, under a faithful and fervent ministry!

Were the occasion important enough to require it, we might here say a little in illustration of the excellence of our liturgy and offices, particularly the form of public worship which is observed in the established church. We might enlarge upon the comprehensiveness and dignified particularity of the confession, in which the whole congregation are directed to join; the spirituality of its prayers, particularly the litany and collects; the peculiar excellence of the general thanks-

* The two-pennyworth of information from Olney will instruct the reader, that excommunicated persons are excluded the privilege of Christian burial according to the church of England; and any one who attentively peruses the service will perceive that there is no actual decision respecting the state of the deceased, independent of character.

giving, which dissenters themselvess have admired; the copious intermixture of Scripture; the opportunity given, and which a prescribed form alone can give with any decency, to the whole congregation, of taking a large share in the worship; and the apostolic gravity, propriety, and devotion of the communion service. But this would occupy almost a volume, did we enter into all the particulars deserving of notice and commendation. We will only observe, that, in a subject of such preponderating excellence, candour would allow without offence a few blemishes: and we could wish that our unmerciful censors would either exhibit their own service, for they have some, to the world, in order to give them the opportunity of comparing the two together, and deciding to which the preference is due; or, if not to be exhibited, from the circumstance of its not being written or printed, and therefore not uniform, would themselves compare, without respect of party, the best single specimen of their own mode of worship, with that which they themselves, or at least some of their party, vilify and endeavour to bring into general contempt.

The dissenting body owe more of their existing advantages than they imagine to the establishment, which they censure and would destroy. The respect which the civil power, in consequence of its alliance with the ecclesiastical, enjoins and enforces to the latter, diffuses that beneficial effect to those religious societies which secede from her. They are regarded by the public with a portion of the same reverence. Another advantage is the very odium which is attached to every thing established, and which includes a correspondent partiality in that particular to every institution which opposes it. A third, is the direct protection, which is afforded them by law (and the heads and representatives of the clergy constitute a branch of the legislature, the influence of which is, and ought to be, great on all religious subjects), and to which, notwithstanding their invectives against any interference of the state with the church, dissenters themselves are not backward to appeal. In this we tax, not their good sense, but their consistency.

People often shelter themselves from a charge, by urging it with vehemence against another: we think, however, that the dissenters, a few of them at least, have something yet to learn in point of candour. The want of candour in those who make the loudest pretences to it, the Socinians, particularly Dr. Priestley, has been acknowledged and exposed by dissenters themselves. It may be observed in Dr. Doddridge, who carried his candour in some respects to an excess which destroyed its nature, that his Expositor is pretty thickly strewed with uncalled-for reflections upon something in the established church, and that some of his most animated improvements are those which are chiefly occupied with the differences between churchmen and dissenters. In truth, people in general only understand or practice one side of candour; and if the dissenters have just cause in some circumstances to complain, as the present author does, of the supercilious airs of ecclesiastics in the church, some of them may with equal justice return the complaint, and allege, in excuse for the distance they keep, that they can scarcely associate with their friends of the dissenting interest without being made to understand and feel, whether intentionally or not, the degrading views which the latter entertain of the church to which they belong; without its being made pretty apparent, that the clergyman of his country's church is considered and pitied as a weak, prejudiced, or insincere man. With such terms of association, no wonder if there is some backwardness to associate. We hope our Olney friend will make the best

use of these well-intended suggestions. And for his further assistance, we will transcribe a passage from an author whom we have no doubt he respects, and from a work with which we suppose him acquainted.

"Do not," says Mr. Baxter in his Poor Man's Family Book, pp. 336, 337, "peevishly pick quarrels with the prayers of the church, nor come to them with humoursome prejudice. Think not that you must stay away, or go out of the church, for every passage that is disorderly, unmeet, yea, or unsound, or untrue. For the words of the prayer are the work of man; and while all men are fallible, imperfect, and sinful, their prayers and praises and preaching will be like themselves. And he that is the highest pretender, and the peevishest quareller, hath his own failings. If I heard him pray, it's ten to one I could tell you of much immethodicalness at least, and sometimes falsehoods, in his words. We must join with no church in the world, if we will join in nothing that is faulty. Nor is every fault made mine by my presence. I profess to come thither to worship God according to the Gospel, and to own all that the pastor saith which is agreeable thereto; but not to own all that he saith, whether in preaching or in prayer, in God's name, or his own, or ours."

Some good observations concerning factious anti-churches occur a few pages before.

We must not conclude this review without apprizing the author of the invective which we are now leaving, that by applying to Messrs. Rivington he may obtain a pamphlet, not much larger than his own, entitled *A serious Call to a constant and devout Attendance on the stated Services of the Church of England; in an Address from a Clergyman to his Parishioners.* By the Rev. Thomas Robinson, M. A. Vicar of St. Mary's, Leicester. It is reviewed by us in our vol. for 1803, pp. 292, &c.; and we recommend the perusal of it to all *impartial* observers and readers, certainly not excepting those of Olney.

The Shipwreck of St. Paul: a Seatonian Prize Poem: by the Rev. Charles James Hoare, A. M. Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Vicar of Blandford-Forum, in the County of Dorset. Cambridge, Deighton; London, Hatchard. 4to. pp. 18. 1808.

Those who have attempted to trace the other faculties and powers of the mind to their sources, and have displayed the omnipotence of labour in forming logicians, critics, and philosophers, have in general considered the spirit of poetry as an 'afflatus,' an inspiration—the touch of some invincible and spiritual hand. Common clay will make the scholar; but the poet is supposed to be formed of more etherial elements: the first may be the man of Prometheus; the last can be animated "only by a spark from heaven." We are general haters of monopolies, and are therefore little disposed to put our seal to a theory which levies such an exclusive tribute of admiration for the poet. It must be confessed however, that, if one thing more than another hampers us in the support of an opposite theory, it is the Musæ Etonienses, Seatonienses, Oxonienses, &c. &c. &c. Good disputants have always been found when the public voice required them; acute critics have started into birth when a little sourness in the national humour promised to provide them readers; novelists have sprung up to feed the public appetite whenever the public purse was likely to feed them: but though universities have called, and patrons have rewarded; although the crowns and cups of modern Mæcenases have been suspended before the eyes of the students for a century, scarcely half a dozen poems have been produced which the Almæ Matres have not been glad to hurry into untimely graves as soon as ever

they saw the light. However, then, we may feel it necessary to dispute the homage which is rendered to Poetry by some, as her *birth-right*, still we are constrained to admit that she has something extra-mundane in her constitution; that she is not governed by common rules or excited by common allurements; and that although the great and the rich may "call this *spirit* from the vasty deep," the question will recur —"but will it come when thou dost call it?"

Still, however, we are by no means inclined to depreciate the value of academical prizes for poetry. They sometimes, though perhaps rarely, serve to awaken powers which have slumbered only for want of a call; and in the case of some French poets, and in those of Porteus, Glynn, Grant, and Heber, with a few others, these mercenaries, if we may so call them, in the poetical army, have fairly rivaled the most free and unbought soldiers. These prizes also, if not often the stimulants of genius, are generally the rewards of industry. If, moreover, they neither create poets, nor materially improve the poetry of the age, they probably mend the writers of prose, by practising them in that species of composition which the genius of moral poetry demands, and which is at once compact, forcible, and figurative. That such benefits do in fact spring from the spirit of poetical patronage, we consider the poem now before us as incontestably proving. It is so respectable, that we rejoice any foreign impulse should have forced it from the author. Its classical references, colouring, and idiom, assure us that he is a man of industry and acquirements; and its point and chastity, if transferred to the regions of prose, would serve well to record the transactions of history, or to convey the lessons of the pulpit. If this poem remind us of any English writer, it is Goldsmith. Now the prose of Goldsmith is closely allied to his verse; and as his first literary labours were in the fields of poetry, the former no doubt derived from the latter much of the neatness and point which it possesses. If, therefore, Mr. Hoare should reap little other harvest from his poetical labours; if in future the muse should prove coy, or the public ungrateful; he will (if our doctrine be well founded) be rewarded by finding himself in some degree a master of that easy and polite prose which distinguished the golden age of English literature. We think, indeed, that a large proportion of the work proclaims the artist not long to have handled the implements of his trade: but this circumstance, while it apologizes for some parts which are better designed than executed, leads us, in reading the poem, not to rest upon it, but to look forward to the future labours of the author. We hope, also, that it may give a better form to the Seatonian poems than they have for some years possessed. For some time it has been the fashion with the candidates to write in what they call blank verse—that is, in lines composed of ten syllables, or more or less, and with or without a certain rhythm or cadence. Now Mr. Hoare has condescended to rhyme; and, in this respect, we trust that future candidates will tread in his steps: so that whereas in these poems both sound and sense were sometimes wanting, the former at least may henceforth be guarantied to them. Another habit of these versifiers has been, to make up in bombast what they wanted in force. Now this poem is perfectly free from this fault, and is a model of simplicity.

But while the poem is certainly very creditable to Mr. Hoare's talents, yet the reader, as he travels through it, will rarely arrive at any of those oases, those ever bright and verdant spots, which at once reward his toil and charm it away. The passage in which the missionary is described, and is cheered on his arduous pilgrimage, we conceive to be more poetical in its conception

and dress than any other in the poem.

" Cease then your fears, ye Saints; th' uplifted rod
In silence kiss, and dare to trust your God.
Bold in his strength, with loudest dangers cope;
Smile e'en in tears, and mid despairing hope.
See Heaven for you its boundless all expand!
See Earth obedient work at your command!
The coward ills at your approach give way,
And yawning Ocean vomits forth his prey.
Recoiling lions fly the shield of truth;
Crush'd the red dragon, blunt the serpent's tooth.
" And thou, dread Providence! whose awful name
Extends through all eternity the same;
To farthest ages kind alike to all,
The God of Jacob, and the God of Paul;
Still now, e'en now, thy mystic love unfold,
And guard thy saints, as thou didst guard of old.
" But chief for him each dark event dispose,
Whate'er his name, and all thyself disclose,
Who, fir'd with holy love, at thy command,
Greatly obedient, tempts some distant land,
To sound thy truth, the message of the sky,
And give unbought what worlds could never buy!
Where'er he roams, whate'er sequester'd spot
Holds his rude couch, or hides his turf-clad cot;
Whether he treads the sultry shores that pine
Betwixt red Cancer and the burning Line;
Or where the solid wave forgets to roar,
Round Greenland's coasts, or frozen Labrador;
O beam, celestial! with thy brightest ray,
And light him lonely on his devious way!
Still round his path with tenderest care assuage
The siroc's poison, and the lightning's rage;
Each dire extreme that shudd'ring Nature shuns,
Siberian frosts, and Abyssinian suns.
If dark suspense e'er cloud his drooping eye,
Or sad remembrance heave one struggling sigh;
If, holy hope just glimmering in his breast,
Dim, and remote, he view the promis'd rest;
Shine inward then! O chase the cheerless gloom,
Fountain of Light! bid Eden's fairest bloom
Spring in the wild; anoint his eyes to see
In heaven his home, and every friend in thee!
" But when mid list'ning crowds the preacher stands,
Heaven's high behest in his uplifted hands,
Give him, unfolding all his bright design
In the full stream of eloquence divine,
To bend obedient nations to his call,
Firm, faithful, zealous, emulous of Paul."

p. 16.

Having borne witness to the excellencies of this poem, our commendation will be rendered less suspicious by a free enumeration of the defects which we fancy that we discover in it.

Too large a proportion of the poem (it appears to us) is dedicated to the storm. It was impossible to manufacture a storm without going to the First Æneid for materials. The author should, however, have remembered, that the " heavens " of Virgil are not always " hung with *black*;" that his storm is a small part of a long poem; and that he relieves the nerves of his readers by frequent contrast, by happy interchanges of light and shade, of the tender and the sublime. It is probably owing to this defect—namely, the disproportionate space occupied by the description of the storm—that the poem comes less home to our business and feelings. If the poem had been less Roman and more English; if it had less bustle and more sentiment; if Virgil had been less consulted than the author's own feelings, it would have more certainly gained and more permanently fixed the public regard. Some few touches of sentiment in the piece make us regret that the author should be such a niggard of them, and that he should neglect to do that often, which he has sometimes done so well.

The versification, it is but justice to add, is unequal. Some couplets are extremely vigorous and poetical; others would easily admit of improvement. We trust that a second edition will give the author an opportunity of bestowing it.

Upon the whole, we think the university has reason to be satisfied with the brows around which it has this year bound its bays. It is a rare thing for them to get a poem worth their money, and we have no

doubt that they feel on the present occasion all the delight of men w° o have made a very good bargain. If Mr. Hoare should not, amidst the grand objects which his professional labours present, find it expedient to adopt the resolution of a brother poet, "nunc versus et cætere ludicra pono," we venture to prophesy that his next poem will enjoy the same academical distinction with this, and both deserve and inherit a larger portion of popular esteem.

LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INTELLIGENCE,

&c. &c.

GREAT BRITAIN.

In the press: A Life of St. Neot, the elder Brother of Alfred the Great, by the Rev. John Whitaker, B.D.;—The Remains of Hesiod, translated into English Verse, by C. A. Elton, Esq.;—A History of Brazil, by Dr. Andrew Grant, recently returned from that Country;—A new and uniform Edition, in 7 vols. 4to., of Patrick, Lowth, Arnold, and Whitby's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures; a new Edition of the Principles of Surgery, for the Use of Chirurgical Students, with Additions, by John Pearson, Esq.;—and a volume of Sermons, by the late Rev. S. Lavington.

Mr. Cappe is preparing for the press a complete History of the Life of Christ, as related by the four Evangelists; in which he proposes to interweave into one continued narrative their several accounts of his miracles, warnings, admonitions, precepts, controversies with the Jewish rulers, &c. &c.

Professor Davy has read a paper before the Royal Society, giving an account of his electrical experiments on the decomposition of the earths, by which he has shewn that they are all metallic oxides, a discovery which may be considered as completing the history of alkaline and earthy bodies, and forming an era in chemical philosophy.

Dr. Parry, of Bath, has recently investigated the causes of the decay of wood, and the means of preventing it. For this purpose he recommends the application of a preparation of the resinous kind mixed with a certain portion of bees-wax. The proportion of the ingredients, and the mode of mixing them, are as follow.—Take twelve ounces of resin, and eight ounces of roll brimstone, each coarsely powdered, and three gallons of train-oil; heat them slowly, gradually adding four ounces of bees-wax, cut in small bits. Frequently stir the liquor, which, as soon as the solid ingredients are dissolved, will be fit for use. It is recommended to dress every part of the wood-work with this composition, twice over before the parts are put together, and once afterwards; and a higher state of preservation is promised from its use than has yet been attained. It should be observed, that in preparing this varnish, it is advisable, in order to prevent accidents, to use an earthen vessel, and to make the fire in the open air.

A curious piece of antiquity has lately been discovered in the church-yard of Hemel Hemstead, Hertfordshire. In digging a vault, the sexton, when he had excavated the earth about four feet below the surface, felt his spade to strike against something solid, which, upon inspection, he found was a large wrought stone, which proved to be the lid of a coffin, and under it the coffin entire, which was afterwards taken up in perfect condition; but the bones contained therein, on being exposed to the air, crumbled to dust. On the lid of the coffin is an inscription, partly effaced by time, but still sufficiently legible, to prove it contained the ashes of the celebrated Offa, king of the Mercians, who rebuilt the abbey of St. Alban's, and died in the eighth century. The coffin is about six feet and a half long, and contains a niche or resting place for the head, and also a groove on each side for the arms, likewise for the legs; it is curiously carved, and altogether unique of the kind. The curate of the parish, the rev. Mr. Bingham, has deposited it in a house adjacent to the church-yard, where the curious are flocking daily and hourly to see it. The church was built in the seventh century. The Watling-street road runs within a mile of this place, and many Roman coins have lately been found in the vicinity, particularly while digging for the Grand Junction Canal.

In July last, Mr. Cannington opened va

rious barrows in the neighbourhood of Stonehenge, under the direction of sir Richard Hoare, bart., and with the aid and assistance of A. B. Lambert, esq., and found a number of curious remains of Celtic ornaments, such as beads, buckles, and broaches in amber, wood, and gold; one of which, for its elegance and appropriate form, is said to be at once a proof of the nobility of the person for whom the barrow was raised, and the elegance of the arts at the period of the interment, about 3000 years from the present period.

A great advantage is said to arise in the culture of potatoes, from setting those potatoes which are intended for seed later, and taking them up earlier, than when they are intended for food. The produce from such plants are said to have stronger powers of vegetation, and to be less liable to disease, than from plants suffered to grow to full maturity. On the same principle, potatoes, from bleak parts of the country, are not liable to curl.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

In consequence, as we understand, of some spirited efforts made by governor Bligh, of New South Wales, to repress the vice and profligacy so generally prevailing in that colony, and particularly to prevent the officers from introducing spirituous liquors among the inhabitants, a practice which has proved a most fruitful source of disorders, the officers of the colony, headed by the lieutenant-governor, and aided by the military, removed him from the government, and placed him in a state of confinement. He is now, it is said, on his return to England. This daring conduct will, doubtless, form the subject of judicial scrutiny.

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

A Sermon against Witchcraft, preached in the Parish Church of Great Paxton, Huntingdonshire, July 17, 1808, with a Brief Account of the Circumstances which led to two atrocious Attacks on the Person of Ann Izzard, a reputed Witch; by the Rev. Isaac Nicholson, A. M. 1s. 6d.

Christ's Supremacy, and His Church's Privilege defended against Human Usurpation. 1s.

A Critical Essay on the Ninth Book of Bishop Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, which gained the Hulsean Prize; by John Norman Pearson, Scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge. 4s.

A new Argument for the Existence of God, foolscap 8vo. 3s.

A Vindication of Evangelical Preaching, in a Letter to a Barrister, occasioned by the First Part of his Hints to the Public and Legislature; by John Styles. 3s. 6d.

An Essay on Future Punishments, intended to shew that the Doctrine of Endless Misery is inconsistent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ; by R. Wright. 8d.

The Office of Reason in Religion; by John Clarke, D. D. Author of the Answer to the Question, "Why are you a Christian?" 5d. or 2s. 3d. per dozen.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Experimental Farmer; being Strictures on various Branches of Husbandry and Agriculture, drawn from a long Series of Practice in various Parts of Great Britain; by Thomas Tibbs. 8vo. 6s.

Good Advice for the Husbandmen in Harvest, and for all Others who labour hard in warm Weather; by T. Beddoes, M. D. 7s.

The Gentleman Farmer and Husbandman's most useful Assistant, in measuring and expeditiously computing the Value of any Quantity of Land at various given Prices per Acre, from 1s. to 10*l.*; by W. Francis. 2s. 6d.

Illustrations of the Lay of the last Minstrel, consisting of Twelve Views of the Rivers Bothwick, Ettrick, Yarrow, Tiviot, and Tweed. Engraved by Heath, from Drawings taken on the Spot by J. C. Schetky of Oxford. To which are affixed Descriptions and Annotations by Mr. Walter Scott, 4to. 1*l.* 11s. 6d. proofs 2*l.* 12s. 6d.

Herodoti Halicarnassei Historicarum Libri IX. Musarum Nominibus inscripti. Textus Wesselingianus passim relictus, argumentorum que, ac temporum notatio; Edit. Friderici Volgangi Reizii, 8vo. 18s. large paper, 1*l.* 10s.

A Letter to the Livery of London relative to the Duties and Office of Sheriff, by Sir Richard Phillips, Knt. one of the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex, price 4s. boards.

An Historical Dissertation on Tea, exhibiting the Chinese Methods of preparing it for the European Markets, Means of Adulterations, its Dietic and Medicinal Qualities, &c. 6d.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The general half-yearly meeting of the Sunday-school Society was held on the 12th of October. The committee reported, that since their last meeting they had issued 8100 spelling-books, 1435 testaments, and 115 bibles, for the use of 77 schools, containing upwards of 5000 children. Since the commencement of their institution, they have distributed about 258,000 spelling-books, 57,000 testaments, and 7500 bibles, to about 3000 schools, containing 251,000 children, besides a sum of 417*l.* for the payment of teachers. In consequence of urgent applications from the isles of Man and Guernsey, the society has engaged to extend its charitable aid to these islands, as well as to Jersey, Alderney, Sark, and Scilly. Great moral benefit was stated to have resulted to the inhabitants of North Wales from the society's exertions; and its attention was now directed to the southern division of that principality. In pursuance of this object, 10,000 copies of the spelling-book in Welsh had been printed for distribution. The society calls on the public for pecuniary aid in their most praiseworthy undertaking; and we trust that their call will be extensively heard and promptly obeyed.

The exertions of the Sunday-school Society having occasioned a general demand for the Welsh Scriptures, the British and Foreign Bible Society have been induced to print large stereotype editions of the Scriptures in that language, which they sell at a low rate, (a rate by which they incur a loss of more than 2000*l.*) to any Welsh minister, whether he be subscriber or not, who applies for them to the Depositary, No. 169, Fleet Street.

METHODIST CONFERENCE.

The sixty-fifth annual conference of the preachers in connexion with the Rev. John Wesley, was held at Bristol in July last. The total number of their members throughout the world is stated at upwards of 317,000: viz. in Great Britain, 126,655; in Ireland, 24,550; Gibraltar, 40; West Indies and Nova Scotia, 14,796, of whom only 1240 are whites, the rest being blacks or people of colour; and in the United States, 151,590. The number of new chapels building, or to be built in the present year, in England and Wales, is 129. There is one part of the directions of the annual conference, respecting public worship, which we should be glad to see carried into effect in every church and chapel in the kingdom:

"We request that all our chapels may be furnished with hassocks, or with kneeling boards; so that every excuse may be taken away from those who persist in the *irreverent* and *unscriptural* custom of *sitting* while at prayer.

"We desire that all our preachers will strongly urge on their congregations the propriety and importance of standing while they sing the praises of God."

SPANISH PRISONERS.

Many hundred copies of the New Testament, in the Spanish language, were distributed among the Spanish prisoners, just before their leaving this country.

WEST INDIES.

We stated in a former Number, that a missionary had been sent by the London Missionary Society to *Demerara*. This missionary, Mr. Wray, writes, that he has, on the whole, been well received there, and that his congregation is receiving large accessions to its numbers of persons of every colour; but that only a few of the negroes understand as yet what they hear, though they manifest a general desire for information on the subject of religion. When the service is ended, he is commonly surrounded by a number of the negroes, inquiring into the meaning of what they have heard, but have not understood, and desiring to be taught to pray. He has adopted the plan of teaching them a catechism, which many of them commit to memory with great ease, and appear earnestly desirous of learning. The principal things he wants are, teachers to assist him, and time, for the night is the only season the negroes can command. The black children, however, who attend him in the day time, learn very fast, and some of them even begin to teach others.

Mr. Elliot, who went as a missionary to *Tobago*, has received liberty to preach on seven different estates; and he observes, that "the opportunities he enjoys of preaching and giving instructions to the negroes and others, their earnest desire of being

taught, the good effects already produced on the minds and conduct of some, and the strong attachment of a few individuals to him and to the cause of Christ, afford him great encouragement to persevere in the work he had begun."

OTAHEITE.

The general state of the mission in this island is represented by the last accounts, dated January 1808, to be nearly the same as during the preceding years.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

The circumstances of the war in Spain have varied little since our last publication. It does not appear that any reinforcements of moment had reached the French army up to the beginning of this month. At that time its number was estimated at 40,000 men. It occupied for the most part the left bank of the Ebro, and seemed chiefly employed in strengthening its position against the expected attack of the patriots, a great part of whose forces (amounting in all, independently of armies of reserve, to 120,000 men) had approached within a league of the French entrenchments. A general engagement was likely soon to take place; the Spanish commanders probably deferring the attack until the rescued army of their countrymen from the Baltic, and the force under sir David Baird consisting of 12,000 men, both which had made their appearance off St. Andero, were in a condition to act on the right wing of the French army, which had extended itself so far to the westward as to re-occupy Bilboa. The co-operation of these two bodies of gallant and well-appointed troops with the main army, would probably ensure, under Divine Providence, the total defeat of the French. It is difficult to account for the tardiness with which succours arrive from France: it seems to indicate the apprehensions of Bonaparte on the side of Austria; and that his plan at present is merely to retain, if he can, his footing in Spain, until he shall have awed or beaten the emperor of Austria into submission, when he will probably endeavour to pour out the fullness of his fury on the head of that devoted country.

The difficulties which Bonaparte experiences at the present moment have probably occasioned the singular interview which has taken place between him and the emperor of Russia, at Erfurth in Saxony. No common object can have induced these emperors of the north and the west to undertake such a journey: yet it is not obvious what purpose of real utility can be advanced by it, which might not have been entrusted to the agency of their ordinary diplomatists. One effect of the meeting is said to be, a proposition made to our court, by a special messenger, on the subject of a general peace. If this statement be correct, the insidiousness of the proposal is sufficiently apparent; nor can it be doubted that the main end of making it is to gain time for maturing his projects against Spain. We, of course, will refuse to treat, except in conjunction with our allies, the Spaniards, the Portugueze, the Sicilians, and the Swedes. This refusal will furnish a fresh theme for declamation, and be adduced to justify some further measures of aggression and dismemberment on the part of these autocrats.

The Spanish minister of state, Cevallos, who accompanied Ferdinand the Seventh to Bayonne, and afterwards returned to Madrid in the train of Joseph Bonaparte, has published a highly interesting detail of the profligate contrivances by which Ferdinand was seduced to Bayonne, and there forced to renounce the throne of Spain. It exhibits altogether a tissue of such perfidious and detestable arts as hardly have their parallel even in the annals of revolutionary France.

The supreme junta of Spain has begun the exercise of its functions at Madrid. The count Florida Blanco presides in it.

Lisbon has been completely evacuated by the French, who have been removed in British ships to Quiberon Bay. It affords us great satisfaction to find that the convention of Cintra contained a secret article, by which the enemy was obliged to relinquish the plunder he had acquired in Portugal. Still, however, the convention is the object of almost universal reprobation, and the call for a strict inquiry into the circumstances that led to it, which the city of London ventured to address to the throne, is echoing from every corner of the kingdom. Both sir Hew Dalrymple and sir A. Wellesley have arrived in England, and, we may presume, have already rendered to government an account of their conduct.

Russia is said to have thrown large reinforcements into Finland, and to have obtained some recent advantages in that quarter over Sweden. The campaign, however, is now closed by an armistice between the two powers, which leaves them, for the present, in the quiet possession of the ground they severally occupied. The Russian fleet which escaped into Port Baltic, according to report, has been dismantled and laid up for the winter. The blockade of the Port has been raised, which gives credibility to the report. It was found impracticable, from the number and strength of the batteries on shore, to effect the destruction of the Russian squadron.

The American embargo is still rigorously maintained. An address from Boston to Mr. Jefferson, soliciting its removal, has drawn from him a kind of apologetic reply, marking, however, his determination not to relax the measure in the slightest degree.

The nett surplus of our consolidated fund for the quarter ending the 10th inst. was 2,308,000*l.*: in the corresponding quarter of last year, it was 2,102,000*l.* The amount of the war taxes in the quarter just ended, is 6,404,000*l.*: in the corresponding quarter of last year it was 6,179,000*l.* The nett produce of the property tax paid into the exchequer in the year ending 10th of October, 1808, is 11,841,000*l.*

DEATHS.

Rev. R. Lock, vicar of Long Bennington, co. Lincoln, and of Farndon cum Balderton, Notts.

At Sedgeford, the Rev. Thomas Weatherhead, vicar of that parish, and of Rougham and Easton, all in Norfolk.

Aged 70, the Rev. Richard Waddington, M.A. rector of Cavendish, Suffolk, in the gift of Jesus college, Cambridge.

At the house of his father, at Shrawley, co. Worcester, the Rev. George Bourne, M.A. fellow of Worcester college, Oxford, and vicar of Steeple-Barton, co. Worc.

At the parsonage, Sutton-upon-Derwent, near York, the Rev. John Sarraude, rector of that parish.

Rev. Mr. Lloyd, vicar of Stapleton, Wilts.

Lately, the Rev. J. Barnes, rector of South-town, and vicar of Gorleston, next Yarmouth, Norfolk.

Aged 55, after having been 20 years severely afflicted with paralysis, the Rev. W. Wilkin, of Melford, Suffolk.

Rev. A. Cockrigg, of Saxilby, in Lincolnshire.

Rev. Benjamin Ingham, vicar of Ardsley, in Yorkshire.

At Cottingham, near Hull, the Rev. Thomas Thirlwell, M.A. of Brazennose college, Oxford, and vicar of Cottingham.

At his lodgings in Yarmouth, the Rev. William Leigh, dean of Hereford, and rector of Plumstead, with Witton and Brundale annexed, Norfolk.

Rev. Mr. Lloyd, of the Hay, Brecknock. He was thrown from his horse, and so very much injured that he died immediately.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Tatib; G. S. Faber; Philograph; A Minister of the Church of England; M. Y.; L. M. D. N.; C. R.; R. A. Ingram; Decens; and Sophron, have come to hand.

ERRATA.

Number for September, p. 575, col. 1, l. 2, for *Quadriges* read *Quadrigis*.
577, col. 2, l. 11, for *et* read *it*.